"CHURCH UNION"
AND THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

EPHRAIM SCOTT

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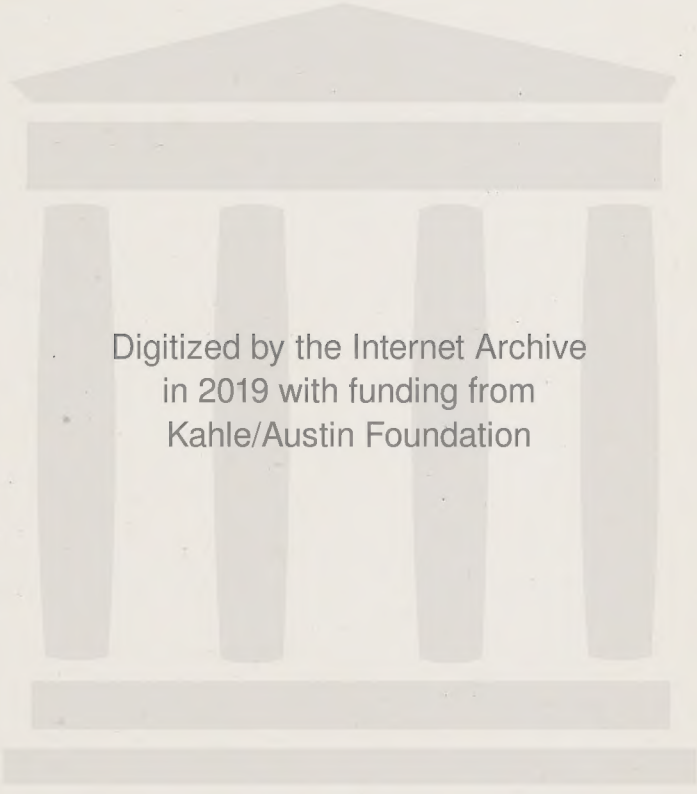
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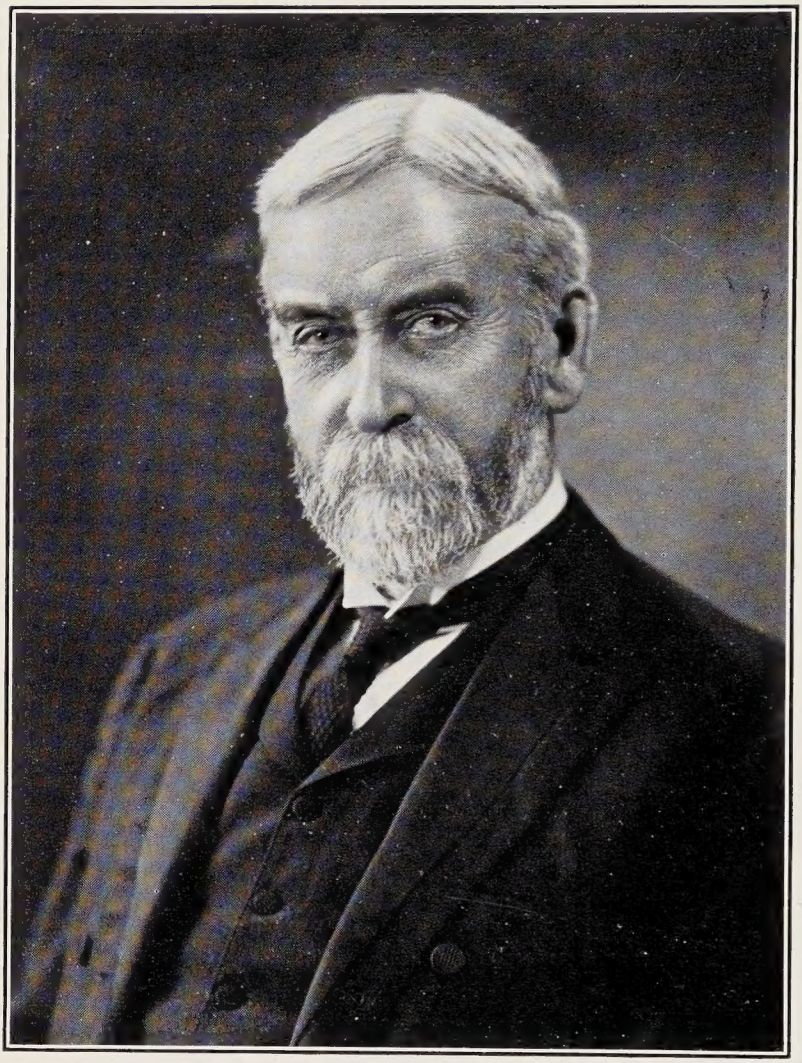

Ephraim Scott

"CHURCH UNION"

AND THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

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Moderator of the General Assembly of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA
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CONTENTS

		Page
	Preface	5
I.	Foreview	8
II.	Truths and Facts	12
III.	Religion and Religious Liberty	15
IV.	Conflict for Liberty	18
V.	The Church	21
VI.	The Presbyterian Church	26
VII.	The Presbyterian Church in Scotland	30
VIII.	The Presbyterian Church in Canada	39
IX.	Unity, Union, Merging	41
X.	Church Merging Ultra Vires	44
XI.	The First Period, 1903—1912	47
XII.	The Second Period, 1912—1917	52
XIII.	The Third Period, 1917—1921	58
XIV.	The Fourth Period, 1921—1925	59
XV.	The Crisis in Assembly	62
XVI.	The Bill in Parliament	66
XVII.	Parliament and The Presbyterian Church	73
XVIII.	"Took All The Constitutional Steps"	77
XIX.	Opinions of British Judges	81
XX.	A Canadian Legal Opinion	87
XXI.	Reasons Urged For Merging	91
XXII.	"That They All May Be One"	95

32438

		Page
XXIII.	The Campaign of Derision	98
XXIV.	Motives for Urging	102
XXV.	Reasons Against Merging	104
XXVI.	Where The Presbyterian Church?	108
XXVII.	Whence The United Church?	111
XXVIII.	The Four Empty Names	114
XXIX.	"The Difference"	122
XXX.	Profit and Loss	127
XXXI.	Some Needs of the Church	131
XXXII.	Three Perils of the Church	140
XXXIII.	"The Word of God" and "Tables"	144
XXXIV.	The Recovery	148
XXXV.	Methodist and Congregationalist	150
XXXVI.	Co-operation	154
XXXVII.	The "Reunion of Christendom"	158
XXXVIII.	"Reunion"—Impossible, Undesirable	163
XXXIX.	The Future	168
XL.	"Lest We Forget"	171

PREFACE

THIS book is written for Christ's ideal of His Church, not the low, earthly ideal of a great physical uniformity under one central human control, as with the kingdoms of this world, but the high, Divine, eternal ideal of a great spiritual unity, whatever its diverse forms, striving only for uniformity with Him in mind and heart and life. "As Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us."

It is written for the right of every man to obey God's voice as he hears it, to do God's will as he sees it, so long as he does not interfere with the rights of others, which can never be God's will.

It is written in protest against all attempt, by any man or body of men, to coerce the faith of others against their convictions of right, thrusting intrusively and presumptuously between them and their God.

It is written in the spirit of unity and brotherhood with all of every denomination and name, who profess to be of Christ, and who, by life, show their profession true;—any profession of Christ which attempts to coerce the faith of others against their convictions of right, being self-confessed untrue.

It is written in acceptance of the doctrine and polity, the religious belief and teaching and the government and worship, of the Presbyterian Church, as in accordance with the unchanging Word of God and adapted to the unchanging need of man.

It is written for Presbyterians, for the people who are the Church and for the young people who are the hope of the Church, who are the Church of today and tomorrow, in the trust that it may help them to know their Church better, to prize it more and to make it more effective in service for Christ.

It is written for those of other sister Churches who may wish to know the Presbyterian Church.

It is written to give some facts of an attempt in recent years to drive the Presbyterians in Canada from their Church and to blot out forever the Presbyterian Church in Canada, with its liberties and rights of the people.

It is written with regret, for in giving facts it has to tell of wrong in the Church, in the name of religion, by that attempt.

It is written of the more general aspects of that wrong and touches but the fringe of the whole sad story of Presbyterian congregations all over Canada, robbed of their church homes because they would not violate their vows, give up their Church and their convictions of right, and, for them, the will of God.

It is written in condemnation of that wrong, but in terms that are mild compared with the extent and deserving of the wrong.

It is written with the knowledge that responsibility for the wrong lies chiefly with the limited number who led and incited the wrong, and without whom the wrong would not have been.

It is written with sympathy for the many who innocently shared in the doing of that wrong, who were misinformed and misled by those whom they trusted as teachers of righteousness and truth.

It is written with like sympathy for those who, from like misleading, were induced to withdraw from congregations which remained Presbyterian, from church homes that were dear to them, and from their Mother Church, to join a new Church builded upon that wrong.

It is written in tribute to the loyal ministers, elders and members who "maintained and defended" their Church against that attempt upon her life.

It is written with thanksgiving for the deliverance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada from that attempt and for her wonderful recovery during the past two years, since

the withdrawal of those who sought her life, and with the prayer that her future life and work may prove her worthy of the deliverance.

It is written with gratitude to sister Christian Communions, Anglicans, Baptists, and others, for sympathy and shelter extended to homeless Presbyterian congregations, an expression of true Christian unity which shines the more brightly in contrast with the spirit that took from those congregations their church homes.

It is written with some repetition, for the same truths and facts require at times to be stated in connection with the subjects of its different chapters.

It is written for those who may be less familiar with such subjects and is in the language of the home, the shop and the street rather than of the class-room.

It is written in the trust that, though simple, its meaning is clear, and with the knowledge that, though brief, its every page is truth.

It is written in the glad assurance that unity of spirit, amid all "diversities of operations," is answering Christ's prayer in growing measure with the passing years, as He sees in ever fuller fruition, throughout the world, "the travail of His soul" and is "satisfied."

EPHRAIM SCOTT

Montreal
4 April, 1928.

I.

FOREVIEW

An outstanding feature in the series of events misnamed "Church Union in Canada" is the twenty years' conflict for religious liberty by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the stand by that Church against persistent attempt, through a score of years, to take away her liberty, her rights, her life.

That attempt sought, by civil law, to do what civil law has no right or power to do, to blot out The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It sought to merge that Church, as also the Methodist and Congregational Churches, so that, as stated in the report of its own legal advisers,—"these Churches would cease to exist,"—and be replaced by a new Church, created by Act of Parliament and named in that Act "The United Church of Canada," where, in doctrine or religious belief, the Presbyterian pledge to the great truths of the Christian faith has no place, and where, in polity or church government, Presbyterian liberty and rights of the people are no more.

Methodists and Congregationalists, some of whose leaders shared in that coercive attempt, accepted the situation, many of them unwillingly. To Presbyterians in Canada, as often in other lands and times, was left the battle for freedom against ecclesiastical and civil tyranny. The result of that stand for freedom the following facts will show.

In June, 1875, the Presbyterians in the different provinces of Canada, one in doctrine or religious belief, and one in polity or church government, united also in one organization, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, with nearly ninety thousand communicant members, in a thousand congregations, grouped in thirty-three presbyteries, four synods and one General Assembly.

After three decades of peace and progress, in happy unity with other sister denominations, came the attempted merging of the Churches with its years of disunion and strife.

Foreview

In June, 1925, with the final failure of that coercive attempt, and the withdrawal of its promoters to another denomination, the Presbyterian Church in Canada celebrated her jubilee by emerging triumphant from her twenty years' conflict for liberty and life and entering her second fifty years, once more at peace and free, with a present communicant membership of nearly twice that former ninety thousand, in about thirteen hundred congregations, grouped in forty-three presbyteries, eight synods and one General Assembly, and extending from Atlantic to Pacific.

THE movement which developed that attempted merging of the Churches, began doubtless, on the part of many, with motive high and true. Many good men viewed it at first with favor. The word "union" had a pleasant sound. A great Church was a pleasing dream. The general attitude towards it, whether in approval, disapproval or doubt, was largely benevolent.

But as the question was studied and its meaning became apparent, its character and methods realized and its results more clearly foreseen, many Presbyterians, at first in favor, turned against it. Opposition steadily strengthened, as did the purpose that in any event the Presbyterian Church in Canada would continue.

On the other hand the ideal of a great organization, a "National Church" to be a power "in the whole . . . religio-political realm" grew in the minds of its advocates, until it seemed to fill the horizon of their vision to the exclusion of all other considerations.

The character and methods of the movement completely changed. At first conciliatory and persuasive, it became intolerant and coercive. In its earlier years its "must" was freedom, brotherhood, democracy, it "must carry the consent of the entire membership." In its later years, as that membership in ever increasing thousands turned against it, its "must" became the imperative of clerical and official autocracy. "It 'must' go forward."

All else of earlier years, "the consent of the entire membership,"—"practically unanimous action,"—Christian charity for the convictions of others, even solemn ordination vows, must now give way before it. No matter what the promises and pledges in the past, or the great and growing opposition in the present, or the certain disunion, disruption and strife in the future, "It must go forward."

Presbyterians who believed it their duty to remain in their own Church did not seek to prevent others withdrawing from it, or entering any other denomination, new or old. They simply claimed for themselves religious liberty; claimed what they knew to be their right, and what they believed to be for them the will of God, the right to work and worship according to conscience, in their own Church.

The promoters of the attempted merging, on the other hand, claimed the right, not only to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church, but to drive out of it all others, and to give it no more a place in Canada's life. They accordingly, in co-operation with some in the Methodist and Congregational Churches, prepared a bill for Parliament which they purposed and proclaimed should merge, by civil power, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, its membership and possessions, pews and their occupants, chattels all and alike, while, in the words of their own law report, the Churches thus merged "would cease to exist."

Parliament, as will later be seen, struck out the most callous and cruel feature of that Bill, the attempt to make every Presbyterian, by civil law, a member of the United Church. But even as passed by a small majority in Parliament it was most unjust, sanctioning the robbery of Presbyterians, the seizure of their church homes and possessions, because they would not change their faith, permitting the confiscation of sacred trusts, bequeathed in the past for the work of the Presbyterian Church, thus violating the guarantees with which the laws of the land had always safeguarded those trusts, and breaking faith not only with the living but with the dead.

That Act, unjust, iniquitous, driven through Parliament by political pressure, and by a small majority, in spite of many members of Parliament, of different parties and faiths, who stood for justice and right, is the blackest page in Canada's Parliamentary history.

The wrong doing of those in the Presbyterian Church who drove to its issue this coercive measure was two-fold. It was in itself a great moral wrong and it did to others a great material wrong. The moral wrong was that when they no longer wished, as they had vowed and promised, "to maintain and defend" the Presbyterian Church, instead of honestly resigning their trust as guardians of that Church, they broke their vows and betrayed their trust, using their positions of trust in attempt to destroy the Church. The wrong to others was in taking from them their church homes and possessions because they would not also break their vows and betray their trust.

The groups of loyal Presbyterians all over Canada, worshipping in rented or borrowed halls, because robbed of the homes which they and their fathers had builded for the Presbyterian Church, homes which in some cases stand empty and unused, or are occupied by others while an unused Methodist Church stands empty near, are witness "from sea to sea," of the wrong of a movement calling itself Christian; while the new church homes which those loyal groups are bravely struggling to build, in place of the homes taken from them, will bear mute testimony to that wrong for generations to come.

The new church buildings which the United Church is erecting, from its central funds, in Presbyterian communities, often for a very few persons, will also be lasting monuments to the fact that the aim of the so-called "union" movement, was not to prevent overlapping, but to thrust its new sect into every community where the thrusting could be done.

II.

TRUTHS AND FACTS

Some Introductory Truths are:—

1. Any society, fellowship or organization, of any kind, for any purpose, must have some condition of existence, some bond of union, some agreement to which those forming the society give their assent. These conditions of agreement "constitute" it an organization. They are its "constitution."

2. Those forming a society or fellowship and accepting its conditions, its constitution, are bound by their pledge of acceptance to keep those conditions so long as they remain in that society.

3. If an organization has, as one of its conditions, that a certain majority of its members can change its constitution or terminate its existence, then the change or termination can be effected upon that condition. It is in the agreement, the constitution upon which that organization has been founded.

4. If an organization has no such provision for change of constititution or for termination, then no majority can change or terminate it. Any of its members who desire change can withdraw from it, and join any other organization, or form a new one, but they cannot impose change upon those who wish it to remain as it is, and who joined it upon that condition.

5. If any members of such a fellowship should attempt, by force of strength or numbers, and in violation of its conditions of agreement, its constitution, to compel a change of those conditions, and to seize the possessions of that fellowship and divide them or transfer them to others, it would be a common criminal act. Having it legalized by political influence in Parliament would not alter its unjust or immoral character.

6. If the members of such a fellowship should become so few that they could not manage the trusts committed to it for its work, it would then be the duty of civil government, as the guarantor of those trusts, to make provision that they be devoted as directly as possible to the end for which they had been given.

7. If a society or fellowship asks for and obtains incorporation by civil government, it is then a legal entity. It has a personality, an identity, which civil government gave, and which civil government can change or take away. If it be not incorporated there is nothing about it which civil government has given, and therefore nothing which civil government can touch, change, or take away. Civil governments may seize its possessions, or punish its members if they break civil laws, but the society, the fellowship, unincorporated, civil government cannot touch.

Some Introductory Facts are:—

1. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a society, a voluntary fellowship, banded together upon the acceptance of certain conditions of religious belief and practice.

2. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is not incorporated. It is not a legal entity. It cannot sue or be sued. It may have boards, committees or trustees incorporated to care for properties or funds entrusted to it for its work, but it does not ask civil government to authorize, endorse or confirm its existence and its beliefs as an organization or Church. It takes authority for its existence from Christ the only King and Head of the Church. To Him alone and not to any civil power, it owes and owns allegiance in matters of faith and worship.

3. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has never had any provision for changing its constitution, dividing or diverting its possessions, or terminating its existence. It is the fellowship of those who accept Presbyterian principles of truth and freedom, so long as they desire and choose such a fellowship.

4. If any outside of that Church disapprove its conditions, its constitution, they need not enter it. If any within it disapprove its conditions upon which they entered it, they can withdraw from it. But they have no legal or moral right to attempt forcing a change in those conditions. It would be a violation of their own pledge, of others' rights, and of the constitution of the Church.

5. In recent years some who had joined the Presbyterian Church in Canada, accepting its conditions of existence, its constitution, have attempted, in violation of those conditions, to force, by civil power, the termination, the extinction of that Church. Failing in that attempt they have seized, by legalized wrong, some of the possessions entrusted to that Church for her work, and have withdrawn with these possessions to a new denomination, the United Church of Canada.

6. The United Church of Canada is not Presbyterian, either in doctrine or polity. In doctrine it has cast aside the Westminster Standards, the Scriptural beliefs of the English-speaking Presbyterian world, and it subscribes to no definite Christian belief, not even to its own "Statement of Doctrine."

In polity it has cast aside the foundation Presbyterian principle, church government by presbyters or elders, chosen by the people and equal in judicatory authority in the Church. It has rejected this principle, for its clergy have rights in all the courts of the Church, but its so-called "elders," chosen by the people, have no rights in any court of the Church, no rights beyond their own congregation. Its church courts do not require to have a single "elder" chosen to office by the people. (See also chap. 28, 29, et al).

7. The Presbyterian Church in Canada, happily free from that menace to her liberty, her rights, her life, is going forward with new heart, hope and purpose in her work for the Kingdom of God.

III.

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

RELIGION is man's belief in a power spiritual and unseen, to which he is responsible, and his effort to do what he believes the will of that Unseen power. The Christian Religion is belief in and obedience to that Power Unseen as He is revealed in Holy Scripture, and in Jesus Christ—"God manifest in the flesh."

Religious liberty is freedom for every man, so long as he does not interfere with the rights of others, to do what he believes the will of that Unseen Power, the will of God.

It follows that in order to religion, there must be religious liberty, for if that liberty be denied to any man by other men, and he is under external constraint of any kind in matters religious, he is not doing what he believes the will of the Unseen but of the seen; he is not obeying God but man, and his unwilling obedience to man is not religion.

It further follows that the only organization or church which can be named religious, is one in which no human will or power comes between any man and what he believes to be the will of the Unseen, the will of God, a church in which no man, or body of men, has the right to command change in the religious beliefs of its membership against their will.

The only church which fulfils this condition of religious liberty is a voluntary fellowship of those who agree in accepting the same religious beliefs, the same creed, and who agree, while in that fellowship, to abide by its conditions of belief and practice.

If any members of such a fellowship change their beliefs they can withdraw from it but they cannot change its conditions. If they could do so that church would be no longer voluntary, with complete religious liberty, and would therefore not be religious, because some would be compelled to change their faith at the will of other men, and would not be doing what they believed the will of God.

The Presbyterian Church fulfils all the conditions of religious liberty. It is a voluntary fellowship. It consists of those who, of their own free will, have accepted the principles of that Church; its doctrine or statement of the teaching of Scripture as to "what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man"; and its polity or government, based upon the teaching of Scripture and the rights of the people.

The members of this voluntary fellowship, the Presbyterian Church, choose some of their number to manage its affairs, not to change, merge or extinguish it, but to care for it as it is, and those thus chosen and entrusted with its management are pledged by solemn oath or vow, "to maintain and defend the same, and to follow no divisive course from the present order established therein."

If any thus chosen and pledged change their beliefs, their only honest course is to resign that trust and not to retain it under false pretence, or to use it in attempt to destroy that Church or coerce others out of it, or to displace it by another church of a different type, with a different attitude in religious belief.

Such attempted misuse of trust would be immoral and unchristian; immoral, because it would be breaking their own vows and betraying a trust committed to them; unchristian, because it would be an attempt to compel others into what those others believe contrary to the will of God.

The attempt in recent years by some in the Presbyterian Church to merge that Church and to replace it by another Church of a different type was a breaking of vows and a betrayal of trust and was therefore immoral. It attempted to coerce others into doing what they believed was not for them the will of God and it was therefore unchristian.

As religion, man's relation to God, doing what he believes to be the will of God, is the supreme concern in human life, knowledge about religion is of supreme importance, so that men may not err in that supreme concern.

Presbyterians should know their Church, her doctrines or religious beliefs based upon the word of God, her polity or government based upon Scripture and upon the liberties and rights of the people. They should know the age-long, world wide history of their Church, what their Church stands for, and how, through all her glorious history, she has nobly maintained that stand. They should know all these things that they may rightly prize their heritage and worthily follow the footsteps of their fathers in maintaining that heritage and transmitting it, unimpaired, to their children.

Had there been more such knowledge in Canada during the past twenty years, many sincere, good people who were led away from the Presbyterian Church would not have been so misled; and the surest human safeguard of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the days to come is a knowledge by her people of what that Church is and stands for, and of her conflicts and victories in the past for freedom and for truth.

IV.

CONFLICT FOR LIBERTY

THE "twenty years' conflict" for religious liberty in Canada was no new thing in Christian history, and the fight for life was no new thing for the Presbyterian Church.

All human history is a story of conflict between the lust for mastery and the love of liberty. In earlier ages, for the most part, the few ruled, the many obeyed. As knowledge spread and men realized their manhood they asserted manhood's rights, and today, in most civilized lands, the people rule and old time despotism is no more.

But the lust for domination has not ceased, as witness conflict everywhere for mastery, between races, nations, classes and persons. So long as human nature continues wholly human, life's outlook bounded by self, and by what self would like to have and be and do, that conflict will go on.

Only when there comes into the human the Divine, with due regard by all for the rights of each, with love and care for others as for self, with justice and right supreme, will that conflict cease and man to man be brother.

But even in the history of the Christian Church, in the fellowship which claims to represent on earth the Divine, the spirit of autocracy, the attempt to dominate, has found large place. It persists in the Church even where it has been banished from the State, and is accepted by those who would not dream of submitting to it in the State.

This may be due in part to the fact that attempt to dominate in the Church incurs, today, no risk to property or life, as so often does like effort in the State, and it may be due in part to the fact that many people take less interest in the Church than in the State. But whatever its cause, the claim of right to dominate, to rule the consciences of others, to disregard the convictions of others, to intrude between others and their God, is seen all down the history of the Church, marring its beauty and hindering its work.

Conflict for Liberty

If the twenty centuries of Christian history be divided into three parts, the central thousand years is a clerical despotism of deepest dye, with the first five centuries sloping downward to it, and the last five centuries leading upward out of it to freedom's brighter day.

The first five hundred years began with New Testament times and the sway of the spirit of Christ. The people were the Church. The new-formed congregations gathered from heathenism chose their presbyters or elders to manage their affairs. "Ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee"—writes Paul to Titus. Some of these elders were chosen to "labor in word and doctrine" as ministers, serving in the Church, while others, as do Presbyterian elders today, continued in their worldly callings.

But gradually those in the more central places and prominent positions in the Church began to assume authority. In 330 A.D., under the Roman Emperor Constantine, the Church became linked with the State, Christianity was established by civil law as the state religion of the Empire, and from that onward, through the central thousand years, in most of the then known world, in Europe and around the Mediterranean, Church and State were one, and both were under despot sway, while the people, in deepest ignorance, did their religious duties and paid their religious dues at the bidding of civil and ecclesiastical superiors, and sometimes paid for disobedience with their lives.

In the last five hundred years the world began to awaken from its age-long sleep. In the awaking of thought and inquiry the Christian religion shared. Huss and Wyckliffe, Luther, Calvin, Knox, and many another, found in monasteries and ancient libraries the almost forgotten Scriptures and preached their truths to the people. Printing was invented and these Scriptures multiplied. The Great Reformation spread. The Presbyterian and Reformed Churches came into being in different lands, and in much of the world today, the people are the Church, and that Church self-governing and free, with Christ its only King and Head.

Conflict for Liberty

But "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," in Church as in State. The spirit of autocracy and clerical domination "goeth about continually, seeking whom" and where it may control, and for years it has made persistent effort to merge by civil law, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, with its liberties and rights of the people, and to substitute a clerical and official autocracy where the rights of the people are no more.

As often in the past, the attempt has failed, and that spirit has gone for the time to its own place. But vigilance will be the price of liberty in future as in the past. Only when the people fully realize that they are the Church, and inform themselves concerning the Church, and interest themselves in the teaching and management and work of the Church as they do in the State, will clerical and official autocracy disappear, and the Church realize its Divine ideal—"One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren"—and the Divine ideal for its ministry—"Not as lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock."

V.

THE CHURCH

"The Church" is used in two ways. It is used of all who ever have been, are, or shall be, true followers of God, "The Church Invisible," known only to Him who knoweth the heart. It is also used of all who outwardly profess to be followers of Christ, who band themselves together in groups or organizations to promote His cause, "The Church Visible."

Of the visible Church there are two main ideals, Presterian and Prelatic, democracy and autocracy. The Presbyterian ideal is that the people are the Church. Everything in that Church rests upon the will of the people, as led by the Spirit of God, under Christ the only King and Head of the Church, His abiding presence in the Church guiding them according to His will so long as they trust and follow Him.

No man has any official position in the Presbyterian Church, as keeper or guardian in that Church, as minister or elder entrusted with its teaching and care, until he is chosen thereto by the people, and all thus chosen, ministers and elders alike, are pledged by solemn oath or vow "to maintain and defend the same." They are all servants in the Church, to care for it as it is, not masters over it to do with it as they may choose.

If any thus chosen to office, to service in the Church, change their minds at any time and do not wish further "to maintain and defend the same," they can resign their trust to which they were chosen by the people. But so long as they hold office, as watchmen, keepers, servants in that Church, they are pledged, not only to the people of the congregation that chose them to office, but to the whole Church, for their office includes a share in the keeping of the Church as a whole. They have no more right to use their position of trust in the Church for the extinction of that Church, than has the keeper of any trust to betray that trust or divert it to a different purpose, object or end.

Those chosen by the people to office in the Presbyterian Church are called presbyters or elders, from the New Testament Greek word, "presbuteros," one who is elderly and experienced, hence from presbyter the name Presbyterian.

There are two classes of elders in the Presbyterian Church, ruling and teaching elders. The latter are sometimes specially known as "ministers," because giving their lives to service in the Church.

These two classes of elders are equal in authority in the Church. All the superior courts of the Church, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, consist of an equal number of ministers and elders, alike in position, rights and powers in those courts.

One apparent exception to this complete equality is that the moderator, or presiding officer in these courts, is always a minister. But the exception is seeming and not real. The moderator has no official power of any kind. The power all lies with the courts. The moderator is for a limited time the presiding officer of the court, and nominally represents the Church, and it is deemed fitting that the Church should thus be represented by a minister, whose whole life is devoted to the work of the Church, rather than by an elder, however worthy, whose life work is along other lines, who is perhaps honorably prominent in local, provincial or federal politics. For if, at the same time, that elder should also represent, as moderator, the Presbyterian Church, the name of that Church would inevitably be dragged, by unwise friend or zealous opponent, into the political arena, and not for the good, either of politics or the Church.

The Presbyterian Church is apostolic in the best and highest sense, in that it follows, in doctrine or religious belief and teaching, and in polity or church government, the teaching and practice of the apostles in founding the Christian Church. It is a pure democracy, with Christ its only King and Head. Every member of the Church has equal rights in that Church, standing pledged to certain

great definite truths of the Christian faith, and acknowledging no right or authority of civil power or of any other power, within or without the Church, to bid him violate that pledge or give up that Church for another of a different type.

The Presbyterian Church, like all other democracies, requires knowledge on the part of the people. They should know the doctrines, the teachings of the word of God for which their Church stands, and the polity or government, with its rights of the people, upon which their Church is founded and to which she is pledged. An untaught democracy is an inviting field, both for ambitious rulers and false teachers, and is liable to become autocracy or chaos.

Hence the effort at the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and especially in Scotland, to educate the people in the truths of the Christian faith. Hence the stand of the Scottish people after that Reformation, against autocracy in Church and State, and their stalwart defence of truth against error.

Where a people have religious knowledge there will be neither autocracy nor chaos. Hence the necessity today for teaching the people the truths of the Christian faith, that they may not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine," nor meekly submit to spiritual autocracy and despotism, but, as freemen in Christ, may realize in all its fulness the promise "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

The prelatic ideal of the Church is that not the people but the clergy and officials are "The Church," with all that the term implies, with the right to officiate and rule in the Church, and the right to select and set apart others to similar office and work, without being chosen thereto by the people; thus constituting a special class within the Church, with special rights and powers, independent of any choice by the people.

Prelacy varies, not in itself or its ideal, but in its way of expressing that ideal. Sometimes it is more patent, openly

claiming clerical and official right to guide, direct and rule "The Church," above and apart from the people. Sometimes it is less open, appearing to give place to the will and choice of the people, but retaining all real power in the hands of the clergy and officials, in an even greater degree than in some Churches that are more openly prelatic.

The United Church of Canada is of this type. Its clergy are chosen and ordained to the ministry in an official succession, regardless of any call or choice by the people. And these ministers, after their ordination to office without any call of the people, may afterwards be appointed to congregations at the will of the Settlement Committee, with or without the consent of the people. The clergy in that Church are thus a class apart from the people, independent of the people, above the people, lords over the Church and not ministers, serving in the Church. Morever they have that position of lordship over the church and the people, not by the choice of the people but by an Act of Parliament, an authority which Presbyterians do not acknowledge in matters of faith and worship.

Further, the clergy and officials of that Church, instead of being pledged to their Church to "maintain and defend the same," as are ministers and elders in the Presbyterian Church, are pledged to nothing in the church, and have unlimited power over the church, given them by that Act of Parliament, "power . . . to alter, change . . . ." to unite with any other church or religious denomination" in any way they may choose. They are thus absolute masters over the church. They are themselves "the Church," and the people have no rights in that Church except what the grace or favor of the clergy and officials in the church courts may choose to allow.

Even the "non-ministerial representatives" in the courts of that Church are selected by the next lower courts, not from elders previously chosen by the people, but whom they will, and in some cases are not even required to be members of the Church.

The three superior courts of the Presbyterian Church, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, each consist of an equal number of ministers and elders, every one of whom must first have been chosen to office by the people.

The three courts of the United Church, Presbytery, Conference and General Council, each consist of an equal number of ministers and "non-ministerial representatives," not one of whom need be of those first chosen to office by the people. In the General Council, the supreme court of that Church, the "non-ministerial representatives" do not even require to be members of the Church.

The action in recent years of some clergy and officials in the Presbyterian Church, disregarding their vows and pledges to the Church, and their position as servants in the Church, and assuming to be lords over it, attempting to destroy their church as a democracy, a church of the people, and upon its ruins to build an autocracy of clergy and officials, where the rights of the people are no more, assuming to be themselves "the church," is an example of what has been too often seen in the church in centuries past, the tendency of the ministry to usurp the mastery.

It is also an illustration to some extent of the way in which the church underwent its change from the Presbyterian system of New Testament times to the prelatic type of later ages, when there was not the knowledge or power on the part of the people to resist that assumption and prevent that change.

VI.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE Presbyterian Church is cosmopolitan. It is at home in all lands and appeals to all peoples, for it rests upon foundation principles of human life, upon man's sense of responsibility to God and his sense of equality with other men, and upon the word of God who created human life for Himself, who knows its needs and how those needs can be satisfied. The Presbyterian Church is founded upon three great principles, the Supreme Sovereignty of God, the supreme authority of the Scriptures as a revelation from God to man, in things of the spirit, and the equal right of every man before God and in the Church of God.

The Presbyterian is the earliest type of organization in human history for the worship and service of the true God. When the Hebrew slaves were to be led out of Egypt, and to be kept at school in the desert for forty years, learning of God, as the world's first organized body of His worshippers, "the Church in the wilderness," Moses, their Divinely appointed leader, was commanded to "Go and gather the elders of Israel," (Ex. 3 : 16) and to give to them for the people God's message of deliverance; and for fifteen centuries, till the coming of Christ, "the elders of Israel" were a feature of the Old Testament Church.

When Christ founded the Christian Church, the New Testament Dispensation of the Church of God, and sent forth His followers to preach the Gospel and win men to Him, they gathered their converts into congregations or churches and, following the old familiar custom, they "ordained them elders in every church," Acts 14 : 23.

Some of these elders were set apart to teach and preach, to "labor in word and doctrine," (I Tim. 5 : 7) as ministers, serving in the Church. Some, as to ruling elders today, remained in their worldly callings, while caring for the congregations or worshipping groups to which they belonged.

Two religious orders or offices, the priests of the Old Testament dispensation and the apostles of the New, were only temporary.

The former were appointed to offer up sacrifice for sin until Christ came and offered Himself a Sacrifice, once for all, and now "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin" and no more need or place for a priesthood in the Church.

The apostles were special messengers, chosen to be witnessess of what had been said and done by Christ, and could not have successors after He had left the earth. The eldership, chosen by the people, was a permanency.

As the Church extended, and questions arose of wider interest than the individual congregation, all the elders who could conveniently gather came together to confer. (Read the story in Acts 15.) Such was the polity of the Apostolic Presbyterian Church. Such is the polity of the Presbyterian Church in Canada today.

The doctrine or religious belief and teaching of that primitive Presbyterian Church was the teaching of Christ and His Apostles as given in the New Testament. Such is the doctrine, the teaching, to which the Presbyterian Church in Canada today stands pledged.

The Presbyterian Church, the Church of the people, in its doctrine and polity, its teaching and government, thus dates back nineteen centuries to the giving of the Gospel and the beginning of the New Testament Church in the shadow of Calvary, and away beyond, in the dimmer light of thirty-four centuries ago, to the giving of the Law and the beginning of the Old Testament Church in the shadow of Sinai.

How that Apostolic Presbyterian Church extended in a few years over much of the Roman Empire, the then known world, all around the Mediterranean and beyond, how the multitude of strangers in Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost heard the Gospel, "every man in his own language," (Acts 2 : 6) and carried that Gospel back to their home lands, how Paul and others took long missionary journey through

Western Asia and Southern Europe, founding churches, Presbyterian in doctrine and polity, is told in the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's letters to some of those churches, in Ephesus, Galatia, Philippi, Corinth and Rome.

The New Testament also tells of persecutions of the Church by heathen rulers. These grew more fierce and cruel a century or two after New Testament times, until in 330 A.D. Constantine became Emperor, embraced Christianity and made it the religion of the Roman Empire.

From that time the Church rapidly changed. To make it pleasing to the heathen peoples of the Empire, and win their acceptance of it as the State Church, many of the forms, ceremonies, customs, feasts and vestments of various cults of pagan worship were adopted and given Christian names. Evangelical truth and spiritual life largely disappeared.

Presbyterian polity also passed. Very early the clergy in the larger centres had assumed a measure of authority over all other elders, teaching and ruling, an assumption which gradually grew, until the bishop of Rome claimed to be the head of the entire Church, the "Vicar of Christ" on earth, lord of all things temporal and spiritual. And while in the middle ages the Church divided, and the Eastern or Greek Church refused to acknowledge his authority, yet for well on to a thousand years, till the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Western Church, most of central and western Europe and beyond, acknowledged his sway, kings and emperors at times holding their crowns from him, owning allegiance to him as their sovereign lord.

During this central thousand years of the Christian era, the Presbyterian Church, the Church of the people, had largely disappeared, save in a few places more remote, as among the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont, in the Italian Alps, where the primitive Apostolic Church was kept alive, and in modern times has carried the evangel all over Italy.

The Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century was the Church of the people coming again to its own, the

people awakening to their rights and demanding them. It was Church re-formation, the Church forming over again as it had been at the beginning. In Germany, where Luther led, the great body of the people followed. In Switzerland, where Calvin taught, the truth took deep root. In France, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the persecution of the Huguenots, it was largely drowned out in blood. In Britain, for nearly two centuries before 1688, when the Stuart dynasty ended and William of Orange came to the throne, it had, at times, a life and death struggle, in which the dungeon, rack and stake played their part. In all the lands where men claimed manhood's right, the right to religious liberty, clerical autocracy and despotism struggled hard to retain the mastery.

The story of the Church for well on to two centuries, from about 1500 A.D. to near 1700 A.D., the Church of the State, the clergy and the officials persecuting the Church of the people, the so-called Church of Christ pursuing to death those who asked only freedom to follow Christ, is the darkest, saddest two century period in human history. Other periods of martyrdom the Church had passed through in early centuries of the Christian era, but these had been the martyrdom of Christians by heathen. The Reformation martyrdoms were of Christians by the so-called Christian Church.

But in later as in earlier centuries the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. And while in some countries the re-formation of the Church after the Apostolic Presbyterian type, was more complete, and in some less so, one result today is the world-wide Presbyterian Church, the Church of the people.

In no other land did the Presbyterian Reformation ideals of the truth of God and the freedom and rights of the people take such deep and lasting hold as in Scotland, and in few lands was there fiercer and sorer persecution of those ideals by despot rulers in Church and State, but of that in another chapter.

VII.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

SPACE forbids even briefest mention of the Presbyterian Church in its many homes in other lands, but a few words of it in Scotland are here given, for two reasons,—it took a deeper hold of the Scottish nation as a whole than of any other, and the Presbyterian Church in Canada, while owing much to Ireland, England, Europe and the U.S.A., is chiefly of Scottish origin.

Religion in Scotland, for the twenty centuries of the Christian era, may be divided, in a general way, into four approximately equal periods,—pagan to 500 A.D., the old Celtic Church to 1000 A.D., the Church of Rome to 1500 A.D., the Reformed Church, largely Presbyterian, to the present.

One of the early methods of spreading Christianity was by a number of men banding together, going to a pagan people, building a home, perhaps a school, teaching those who came, and going out to teach and preach in the surrounding country, as do mission families in heathen lands today.

When or by whom Christianity first came to Scotland is dim in the misty past. Probably the earliest permanent impression was by St. Ninian, who was born in England, ordained to the priesthood in Rome, built a monastery in Southern Scotland, labored there, and died in 432 A.D.

A century later, 563 A.D., St. Columba, of Irish royal race, came with twelve companions to Scotland, built a monastery on the Island of Iona, and for thirty-four years, until his death in 597 A.D., travelled the country, preaching the Gospel and founding in many places primitive religious and educational communities and schools.

In the previous century St. Patrick, a Scotchman, converted in Ireland, preached there the Gospel and became Ireland's patron saint. St. Columba, an Irishman, now brings to Scotland the precious gift. It may here be noted as an added coincidence that John Knox, just a thousand

years later, preached the Gospel throughout Scotland and established parish schools.

That old Celtic Church, the foundations of which were thus chiefly laid by St. Ninian and St. Columba, gave attention to the education of the people. One aim was that as many as possible of the young should be taught to read and write. It has been said that Scotland, for those days, was better educated than almost any other country, and that she was more educated than civilized, many of her people, learned for the times, living in primitive conditions.

By 1000 A.D. the earlier Christian life of that old Celtic Church had largely disappeared. Monasteries, abbeys and nunneries of the Church of Rome had been established throughout the land, and for nearly five centuries, to 1500 A.D., Rome was practically supreme in Church and State.

One feature of this Roman period was a continuance, in some measure, of the policy of education. In the latter part of this period were founded the universities of Glasgow, St. Andrew's and Aberdeen, and, as in more recent times, many Scottish students went to the Continent for study.

A second feature of this period was the greatly increased wealth of the religious communities, chiefly in gifts and bequests of land. Men who had lived rough, reckless lives, nearing death, gave their property to the Church to atone for their sins, until, as stated on good authority, the religious orders owned half the wealth of Scotland.

A third feature of this period was the growing immorality of those religious communities, both of men and women, until their ill report reached Rome and the pope gave orders to have the evils corrected.

But a mightier corrective than papal edict was beginning to awaken the world. The Gospel was being preached in many centres on the Continent. Scottish students abroad, some of them studying for the priesthood, caught the Divine fire, came home and preached that Gospel to the people, teaching the precious truth that pardon for sin is

obtained, not through any human power of churchmen or Church, but only through faith in Christ, and that all have direct and equal access to Him. That Gospel was eagerly accepted. Thus dawned the Reformation in Scotland.

When that Reformation began, a little after 1500 A.D., the Roman Church, to stamp it out, seized some of the preachers, Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart and others, and burned them at the stake. But the people, already alienated by the open immorality in the Church, and now shocked by its cruelty, and won by the preaching and lives of the Reformers, turned to the Bible and the Gospel in numbers that for the time gave them a measure of safety.

John Knox, the greatest figure in the Scottish Reformation, was born 1505 A.D., near Edinburgh. He studied first for the priesthood, but embraced the Reformed faith, preached throughout Scotland with great power, organized the Presbyterian Church, the Church of the people, after the New Testament type, and its first General Assembly, consisting of six ministers (most of them converted priests) and thirty-six elders, was held in Edinburgh, 1560 A.D.

But the Stuart Kings would not so readily yield the right of a free people to decide their own faith and worship, and much of the two centuries before the Revolution Settlement in 1690 A.D., was a story of cruel persecution on the one side and patient suffering on the other which is today but faintly realized.

One feature of that nearly two hundred years of conflict in Scotland for religious liberty, as of the recent "twenty years' conflict" for religious liberty in Canada, was the uprising of the people and their calm strong stand for truth and freedom.

The attempted coercion of the Presbyterian people in both cases was by leaders who called themselves "The Church," who, in Scotland, controlled Church and State, and in Canada controlled the Church Courts, and, by political influence of themselves and others, controlled, in measure, the Parliaments.

The measure of coercion differed. In Scotland those who sought liberty to worship according to conscience were imprisoned, burned and shot. In Canada they were merely robbed of their church homes and possessions. But in Canada as in Scotland church officialdom did its utmost to coerce the Presbyterian people and take away their religious liberty.

A second feature of that earlier Reformation period in Scotland was the active part taken in it by many of the more prominent of the people. Dukes, earls, barons, lords and lairds, with large or lesser following, stood for religious liberty, some of them giving their lives for their faith. Since that time some of the nobility of Scotland have always been "elders in the kirk."

A third feature of these two centuries of conflict for religious liberty was the covenants made and signed, sometimes by a few leading men pledging themselves to each other to the utmost of their means, strength and following, and sometimes of wider range, signed by large numbers of the people, all of them pledging loyalty to Christ and to His Gospel, in opposition to what civil and ecclesiastical powers sought to force upon them.

There were in all more than a score of these covenants, chief among them being the National Covenant, by the people of Scotland, in 1638, and the Solemn League and Covenant, by Scotland and England, in 1643. Hence the name sometimes given to this period, "The times of the Covenanters."

The earlier part of that two century conflict was between the authority of Scripture and the authority of Rome, the Scottish people claiming the former and Scottish sovereigns in league with France, seeking by fines, imprisonment and death, to enforce the latter.

The latter part of that two centuries, up to 1690, was more clearly a struggle between rulers and people. There was on the one hand the conviction of the people that they were right, that Christ alone was King and Head of His

Church, and their unalterable purpose that in His strength they would be true to Him. There was on the other hand the stubborn fanaticism of the Stuart Kings, with their claim of right divine to rule the souls as well as the bodies of the people, a claim still made by some would-be lords of conscience in Canada.

Through all this period the struggle went on and the last thirty years before the Revolution Settlement in 1690 was the bitterest and bloodiest of all, "the killing time," when thousands of Scotland's best were shot, burned or banished, and thousands more were impoverished by fines and plundering because they chose to be faithful to their God. Those three decades, a century after the days of Knox, are dark with cruelty and slaughter, but bright with heroism and faith, until truth and freedom triumphed, and in 1690, after the Stuart dynasty had passed, the Presbyterian Church in Scotland entered in some measure into her heritage of freedom.

What the world owes today to the struggles and sufferings of the Covenanters is beyond human compute. Had they not stood firm unto the death, had prelacy and despotism triumphed, the religious liberty that Scotland's sons have carried with them wherever they have gone throughout the world, would have been unknown.

And when Presbyterians in Canada rejoice once more in their freedom, let them remember the price paid for that freedom in the long ago, and thank God anew for the heritage of religious liberty received, and for the strength and purpose given to maintain that heritage for their children.

The second half of this Reformation period, some two and a half centuries, from 1690 to the present time, opens with one of the gladdest jubilees the world has ever known. For a generation there had been bitter persecution but now it is past. Those in hiding for years in dens and caves of the earth can come forth. Banished ones can come home. Families can gather unafraid. Who can measure the sigh

of relief and thanksgiving that went up from Scotland when the "killing time" was past?

But though active persecution was ended, and the Presbyterian Church was in 1690 established by law as the National Church of Scotland, it was not yet the ideal for which many had suffered, and which Knox had organized more than a century before. Two things yet in the Church had their ill effect through many future years.

One of these was the character of her ministry. Through the years of persecution, the civil authorities had appointed to parishes, as ministers, many who were not Presbyterian and who had small sympathy with evangelical truth. At the Revolution Settlement in 1690, on their professing to accept the Confession of Faith, many of these men were permitted by those in power to remain and had their place in the Church. Through their influence, others, like minded, were admitted to the ministry, and these "Moderate Presbyterians," "Moderates," many of them more inclined to rationalism and prelacy, were not a help to the Church in her stand either for freedom or for truth.

The other hindrance to true progress was the intrusion of civil power into the spiritual affairs of the Church. The people had freedom of worship but not freedom in their choice of ministers. In the government of the Church, Knox had claimed, and for a time the Scottish kings and parliaments had acknowledged the claim, that the Church in matters spiritual must be free from civil control, that the people must have the right to choose their own religious teachers, their ministers.

This claim was granted by the Revolution Settlement in 1690, when the Presbyterian Church was established as the National Church of Scotland, and seventeen years later, in 1707, it was confirmed in the treaty of Union between Scotland and England when Scotland gave up her separate National Parliament.

But only five years later, in 1712, the British Parliament, in violation of treaty and covenant and pledge, took away

that right of the people, and civil patrons, land owners or others in civil authority, were given the right and power to appoint the minister of a parish.

This power of appointing a minister, with or without the consent of the people, was more recently given, by the Canadian Parliament, to the Settlement Committee of the United Church of Canada, a form of patronage which disregards the rights of the people just as did the patronage imposed by the British Parliament upon the people of the Church of Scotland two centuries ago.

That burden of intrusion unfairly placed upon the Church of Scotland, taking away the rights of her people, was the cause of most of her troubles for many a future year. It was the chief cause of the divisions in the Church and secessions from it.

One secession was in 1733, some two score years after the Revolution Settlement in 1690, and a score of years after the imposition of patronage by the British Parliament. From that grew the Secession Church.

It began in a small way. A few ministers, the Erskines and others, had refused as a Presbytery to induct an unwanted minister into a protesting congregation, and were disciplined by Assembly. They organized the Secession Church, which rapidly grew. The people, all over the land, opposed to such intrusion of ministers, formed worshipping groups and congregations, and soon the "Secession Church" was a strong element, numerically and spiritually, in Scotland's life.

About a score of years later, in 1752, took place another division and secession. It was largely from similar cause, in like manner, and with like rapid growth, forming the "Relief Church," relief from the burden of patronage. Why they did not simply join the Secession Church there is not here space to tell. They followed duty as they saw it.

A century later came another great division of Presbyterianism in Scotland, the "Disruption" and the "coming

out" of the Free Church in 1843. This was owing in the main to the same cause as the earlier secessions, the interference of the civil power in the Church, and the claim that the Church in matters spiritual must be free from such intrusion.

But while from the same cause, it was vastly different in magnitude and manner from the secessions of a century before. Those secessions had begun small and had grown. This started out full grown and grew.

Careful preparation had been made for it and for the organization of the new Free Church, and at the General Assembly in 1843, nearly five hundred ministers and a great body of elders, after their protest against the intrusion of civil power into the Church, and their claim of right to the freedom of the Church in things spiritual had been laid upon the table, arose and walked out of the Assembly, the ministers giving up their government stipends, giving up their manses and churches, and going forth with nothing but their confidence in God and right. They marched in procession to a neighboring Hall and constituted as the General Assembly of the Free Church, and all over Scotland the people in large numbers followed their example.

Four years later, 1847, the Secession and Relief Churches which had begun a century earlier, came together as the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and for a further half century these three larger Scottish Presbyterian Churches, as well as some smaller, carried on their work side by side, in an ever growing spirit of unity, members of the one great Presbyterian family.

In 1875, the Established Church succeeded at last in getting rid of the burden of patronage which had been unfairly imposed upon her by the British Parliament over a century and a half earlier, in 1712; and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, in its different branches, was once more free as in the day of Knox, three hundred years before. There still remained in the "Kirk" the headship of the State, which was modified in 1927.

In 1900, the U. P. Church and the larger part of the Free Church came together to form the United Free Church, a part of the Free Church declining to join in that step and remaining, as before, "The Free Church of Scotland."

Negotiations are at present in progress for union between the two larger Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, the Established Church and the United Free Church.

This brief review of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland gives only outlines. There were other important features. There were the Cameronians who would not accept the Revolution Settlement, and organized separately, as "The Reformed Presbyterians." There was the smaller division for a time in one of the earlier Secession Churches, over the Burgess oath, an oath to civil power, hence the term Burgher and Antiburgher, those who would and would not take the Burgess oath. But these and other events in Scottish Presbyterian history are beyond the scope and purpose of these pages.

May the Presbyterian Church in Scotland in years to come, whether in one regiment or more, march as one great spiritual army under Christ her only King and Head, doing well her part, as in years and centuries past, in maintaining religious liberty and in winning Scotland and the world for Him.

VIII.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

From the different Churches in Scotland for many years came the larger part of the Presbyterian immigration to Canada, some of it to the Maritimes and some to older Canada (Ontario and Quebec).

In earlier times these Scottish immigrants, as they organized their congregations and builded their churches, retained their previous church affiliations and names and thus continued in Canada the divisions which had taken place in Scotland.

Besides these divisions were the distances and the lack of communication, so that even those from the same parent Church in Scotland had to organize as separate churches in the different provinces of British North America.

But in this new land there was no reason, apart from distance, for continuing the divisions. There was no patronage or state control, doctrine and polity were alike in all. And in the half century, from 1817 to 1870, there were six Presbyterian reunions, smaller and larger, two in Canada, (Ontario and Quebec) and four in the Maritimes. Two of the latter were chiefly geographical, churches of the same Scottish lineage in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick uniting as one.

After these reunions there were four principal Presbyterian Churches in Canada, two in the Maritimes and two in Ontario and Quebec, one of each two nominally connected with the "Church of Scotland," and the other representing all other Presbyterians.

But there was now no reason for even these four being separate. There was no state connection of any kind. Doctrine, polity and practice were the same in all. Distance too was disappearing. The formation of the Dominion and the building of railways brought all the provinces nearer together, and in 1875, the four Presbyterian Churches, two east and two west, reunited to form "The Presbyterian Church in Canada."

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

In 1925, when fifty years old, this Church passed through a crisis. There had been persistent attempt for some twenty years, as in Scotland for two hundred years prior to 1690, to blot out the Presbyterian Church by power of civil law and replace it by a clerical and official autocracy where Presbyterian rights of the people have no place.

But as with that attempt in Scotland, and many another like attempt in history, to blot out the Presbyterian Church, the Church of the people, and replace it by a Church of the clergy and officials, the attempt in Canada failed. The Presbyterian Church in Canada, as in Scotland and other lands, has come safely through all attempts at her extinction and is happily free from much that has hindered her work in the past score of years.

It may here be noted that the reunion in 1875 of the four Presbyterian Churches in Canada, two east and two west, into The Presbyterian Church in Canada, had nothing in common with the attempt in recent years to merge the latter Church. In the former there was no change of any kind for any of the four uniting Presbyterian Churches. All of them were identical in doctrine and polity. It was simply a coming together of Canada's Presbyterians.

The latter attempt, which finally failed in 1925, sought, as did the attempt in Scotland during "the killing time," to blot out the age-long, world-wide Presbyterian type, the Church of the people, and on its ruins to build a clerical and official autocracy. The whole principle of religious liberty for which Presbyterians have stood and suffered and died, all down the history of the Christian Church, and in Scotland for two fateful centuries before 1690, was at stake.

But once more the Presbyterian Church has come safely through, suffering as in the past the loss of possessions, but maintaining its religious liberty unimpaired, and its principles more fully realized by the people and more firmly established in their purpose and life than ever before.

IX.

"UNITY," "UNION," "MERGING."

BEFORE giving some facts of the attempt to blot out in Canada the Presbyterian Church, the attempt to make Canada the only considerable country in the world without a Presbyterian Church, the only country from which the Presbyterian Church had been banished by civil law, and therefore no longer a free country, it may be well to note the two cloaks, "unity" and "union," under cover of which that attempt sought to hide its real character and to win the favor and consent of the people.

"Unity" and "union," different in meaning, were continually used interchangeably by pulpit, platform and press, the teaching of Scripture on unity being quoted as command for union, and even for attempted compulsory merging by Act of Parliament.

Unity is of the spirit, with no reference to outward organization or name. All true followers of Christ are "one in Him." They are conscious of a kinship with those of other Christian communions in whose lives they see the life and spirit of Christ. This unity is manifested in many ways, as in the New Year week of united prayer throughout the Christian world, for well on to a century past, and in the oftentimes when all the denominations in a community gather in one of the churches to rejoice in the joy of that Church or to sympathize with its sorrow, to pray together for some common need or give thanks for common good.

Most evangelical Churches and Christians show this unity in their lives—"keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," and thus answer Christ's prayer "that they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us"; one in spirit for God is a Spirit.

This unity of spirit, this consciousness of brotherhood, exists between those who may differ widely as to some of

their religious beliefs and their choice of outward organization; and each, while fully persuaded in his own mind as to the things in which they differ, recognises the right of others to follow and serve Christ in the way they believe best and right.

For example, one Christian believes that the door of admission to the membership of the visible church should be baptism by immersion. Another believes that the door of admission to the Christian ministry should be episcopal ordination or consecration in the line of "apostolic succession." Neither of the two can accept the belief of the other, while a third can accept neither, and they must organize in different groups or churches, for freedom in their teaching and work.

But if each of these has in himself, and can see in the others, something of the spirit of Christ, and can look upon others as brethren in Christ, and pray for the success of the others in winning the world to Christ, that is Christian Unity, the bond of the Church Invisible, a bond above all that is outward and earthly, a bond which will abide when the earthly and temporal are forever past, and the work of the Church in this life is complete.

"Church Union" on the other hand is commonly used of the outward and visible. It is the drawing together into one outwardly uniform organization, under one human management and control, of those who are of one mind regarding the visible Church.

But while unity and union are thus of different spheres, one inward and spiritual, the other outward and formal, they both find expression in attraction, in drawing together, and not in being driven or placed together by some outside power.

"Merging" on the contrary is the extinction of two or more separate organizations, by some controlling power outside themselves, and their replacement by a new organization. To call such exercise of outside power by the name of "union" is a misuse of words.

"Unity," "Union," "Merging"

Merging must have a necessary condition before it can take place, and a necessary result after it has taken place. The necessary condition is that the organizations to be merged must be legal entities, corporations, created by civil law, of which civil law can take hold.

The necessary result is that the organizations merged cease to exist. The unionists' lawyers who prepared for Parliament the Bill for merging the Churches, stated in their report that "upon the passing of the Act, these Churches would cease to exist."

In the attempted "merging" of the Presbyterian Church there was not the necessary condition, because that Church is not a civil corporation and cannot be merged. And after the attempt there is not the necessary result, for the Presbyterian Church in Canada has not "ceased to exist." It continues as it has been for the past half century and more.

X.

CHURCH MERGING ULTRA VIRES

The attempted extinction of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the attempt to merge it, to displace it by a new Church of a different type, where Presbyterian principles and ideals have no place, where the Presbyterian Church "would cease to exist," was not only a betrayal of trust by the so-called Presbyterians who made that attempt, but it was in every respect an assumption of power to which no one promoting that attempt or aiding in it had any right.

Neither the majority of the Presbyterian people (though less than one-third of them voted for it) nor a majority in church courts or in national parliaments have any right or power to wind up, blot out or merge the Presbyterian Church, and the votes of any and all of those parties to that end were ultra vires, invalid, of no effect.

The votes of the people to that end were of no effect. The Presbyterian Church is a voluntary fellowship of those who agree in accepting Presbyterian doctrine or religious belief, and Presbyterian polity or church government.

If any in that Church change their belief and profession and no longer profess to accept the doctrine and polity of that voluntary fellowship they are no longer of the Presbyterian Church. If nine-tenths of them change their belief, the one-tenth who still maintain their profession of adherence to that doctrine and polity are the Presbyterian Church. The nine-tenths who change cannot prevent the one-tenth continuing their acceptance of it and thus continuing the Presbyterian Church, the fellowship based upon and pledged to Presbyterian principles.

Members of the Presbyterian Church may withdraw from that Church and join another, but they cannot take with them the Presbyterian Church. By their act of accepting another church, of a different attitude in doctrine and

polity, they leave behind them the Presbyterian Church. Therefore all votes of the people in the attempt to blot out that Church, while they served to show the attitude of the people, showing that less than one-third of them voted for that attempt, many of these being misled, yet to merge the Presbyterian Church in Canada those votes of the people were ultra vires, invalid, of no effect.

Nor have Presbyterian church courts any right or power to merge, blot out or end the Presbyterian Church in in Canada. That Church has no provision for its own extinction. The courts of that Church are chosen and appointed to care for the Church as it is, and are pledged, by solemn vow, "to maintain and defend the same, and to follow no divisive course from the present order established therein." Any who wish change can withdraw from that Church, but they have no right or power to blot out, wind up or merge that Church. Therefore, all the resolutions of the General Assembly and of presbyteries for merging the Church were ultra vires, invalid, of no effect.

This principle was often asserted by Presbyterians in defending their Church. They protested in Assembly that the question, in any form, of bringing to an end the pledged acceptance of Presbyterian doctrine and polity was incompetent to the Assembly and that in taking part in discussing the question in Assembly they were not to be held as acknowledging that competence.

But does not every Presbyterian minister and elder promise to be obedient to the courts of the Church? Yes; after every member of those courts has vowed "to maintain and defend" the Presbyterian Church. But whenever those courts of the Church prove untrue to the Church, and untrue to their vows to "maintain and defend the same," and attempt to destroy the Church, then it becomes the duty of every loyal minister, elder and member of the Church to "maintain and defend" it against the disloyal attempts of those disloyal church courts.

Church Merging Ultra Vires

Nor have civil governments any right or power to merge or end the Presbyterian Church. That Church is simply the fellowship of those who declare their acceptance of Presbyterian doctrine and polity and it has no existence apart from that fellowship. It is not a legal entity which civil government can touch. It cannot sue or be sued, seize or be seized, by civil law.

Parliament cannot prevent men from accepting and holding the religious beliefs of the Presbyterian Church. It may punish them for declining to give up their Church. It may punish them by taking from them their property. It may punish them, as did Herod the Presbyterians in Judea, Nero the Presbyterians in Rome, Claverhouse the Presbyterians in Scotland, and some in our day the Presbyterians in Canada, but it cannot touch the Presbyterian Church. That Church continues as if the United Church Act had not been passed by Parliament, the only difference being that some of its members have withdrawn to another Church and some of its property has been taken from it by legalized injustice.

Bearing in mind that in all attempts to end, by merging, the Presbyterian Church, no one making those attempts had any power or right so to do, and that all such attempts were ultra vires, invalid, of no effect, a brief survey of those attempts may be grouped in four periods.

XI.

THE FIRST PERIOD, 1903-1912

As shown in the previous chapter neither the people, the General Assembly nor the Canadian Parliament had any right or power to blot out the Presbyterian Church in Canada, or to displace that Church by a new denomination of a different type, where Presbyterian principles and ideals, and pledge to those principles and ideals have no place.

But while all such attempts were ultra vires, a study of them may be helpful to Presbyterians because of the lurid light which they cast upon the character of the "union" movement through a score of years, from its first appearance in the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1903, clothed as an angel of light, to its disappointed exit from that Assembly, in widely different garb, in 1925.

In 1903, at Vancouver, the General Assembly received a letter from the Dominion Methodist Conference advocating "church union," stating that it had appointed a committee upon the subject and inviting Presbyterians to confer. The letter was referred by the Assembly to its Committee on Correspondence with other Churches. No further action was then taken.

In 1904, at St. John, N.B., the Assembly "in response" appointed a committee to confer. All in that Assembly desired the fullest measure of unity with other Churches, so long as the freedom and integrity of the Presbyterian Church was maintained, but some were opposed to any step by which that freedom and integrity might be imperilled. They were assured, however, that the appointment of a committee involved no such risk, that it was "only to confer" and that "declining to confer would not be courteous to a sister Church."

The Assembly accordingly appointed a committee of forty-four ministers and twenty elders, sixty-four in all, resident from Halifax to Victoria, the cost of their meetings

to be levied proportionately upon the various funds of the Church, home missions, foreign missions, etc.

There was then no general budget fund. Congregations gave directly to each mission fund, and the action of Assembly in thus diverting funds given in trust for a definite mission work was legally and morally indefensible. But it was continued for many years until a special "church union fund" was established.

In 1905, at Kingston, the Assembly received from its "union committee" a report of its conference during the year with committees of the Methodist and Congregational Churches. In the closing paragraph of that report was the following statement:—"It was universally recognized in the joint committee . . . . that a union of the Churches, to be real and lasting, must carry the consent of the entire membership." (Assembly Minutes, 1905, page 280.)

The report, with that statement, was adopted by the Assembly and sent forth to the Church. It was a clear declaration by the Assembly of a foundation principle of Presbyterianism, that the people, not the clergy and officials, are the Church, and it was just as clearly a pledge that no step in the direction of "church union" would be attempted without that membership's "entire consent."

For the next four years, 1906-1909, the "union" committee reported to Assembly each year its progress in preparing a "basis of union." By 1909 that basis was in measure complete, many points where agreement could not be attained, being left over for the General Council of the new Denomination, a cheap and easy but unwise and unworthy way of dealing with difficulties.

Always there was opposition to further expenditure of time and money on costly meetings of the "union committee" and to creating further unrest in the Church. Always there was the answer that it was "only conference," and that "no official step would be taken towards 'union' without first consulting the people"—as had been so definitely pledged in 1905.

As shown in a preceding chapter, neither membership nor Assembly had any right or power to blot out, wind up or merge the Presbyterian Church in Canada. But that resolution of Assembly in 1905, as to the "consent of the entire membership," shows the purpose declared and the pledges given, upon which Presbyterians believed they could fully rely and depend.

In 1910 at Halifax, the convener of the "Union Committee" presented his report to Assembly, and, to the shocked surprise of many, moved that the "basis of union," as submitted, be approved by Assembly and "transmitted to presbyteries for their judgment under the Barrier Act."

The Barrier Act is intended to be a barrier against hasty legislation by the Assembly. It provides that certain important measures, after approval by the Assembly, must also be approved by a majority of the presbyteries before becoming effective. When a majority of the presbyteries thus approve, the next Assembly may put that legislation into effect.

But the Barrier Act has also its barrier, its limitation, the Constitution of the Church, beyond which neither Assembly nor presbyteries can pass. The motion to adopt this "basis of union" and transmit it to presbyteries under the Barrier Act, not only went beyond the Constitution of the Church, but was an attempt to abolish both the Church and its Constitution, and was therefore beyond the power of the Assembly and the presbyteries.

As a further arbitrary step, after the motion and an amendment had been presented, that Assembly allowed but one hour, divided into six periods of ten minutes each, for the discussion of this momentous question, on this its first appearance in the General Assembly as a definite proposal, with a definite "basis of union," and it was driven through the Assembly, practically without discussion, in spite of protests and pleadings to the contrary.

This action of a majority in Assembly was not only unconstitutional and incompetent in itself, and intolerant in

its stifling of discussion, but it was an attempted definite step towards "union," without consulting the people, as had always been promised.

It was thus a direct violation of the pledges of Assembly and a breach of faith with the people, such as no honorable secular organization would allow, and if it had not taken place would be deemed incredible in a court of the Christian Church.

At this action, this revelation of a character in the movement hitherto undreamed, some who had formerly favored it turned from it, and resentment against such treachery was deep and wide spread among the people. But a majority of the presbyteries voted by majority in its favor, and endorsed the shame and wrong.

In 1911, at Toronto, the Assembly, having taken two unconstitutional steps towards "union," action by Assembly and by presbyteries, without consulting the people, as had always been promised, resolved to take a vote of the people. This was an apparent concession to the people, but only apparent, for the people had now the unfair handicap that the Assembly and the presbyteries had already made majority pronouncements in favor of merging the Presbyterian Church.

Although these pronouncements were unconstitutional and ultra vires they were used as pressure upon the people, who were told that they must obey the courts of the Church, that to do otherwise was schism and sin. The people were thus never permitted to express freely their judgment upon the question. They could now only follow their conviction of right, and oppose the blotting out of their Church, under threat of Divine displeasure, "sinning against God."

The total membership of the Church, including elders, at the end of 1911, when this first vote of the people was taken was 306,061. (Assembly Minutes 1912, page 596.) Of these there voted for "union," 113,000; against it 50,753. (Assembly Minutes 1912, page 330, Q.I.)

In 1912, at Edmonton, the Assembly on receiving that vote of the people, resolved:—"In view . . . . . of the extent of the minority which is not yet convinced that organic union is the best method of expressing the unity sincerely desired by all, the Assembly deems it unwise immediately to proceed to consummate the union, but believes that by further conference and discussion, practically unanimous action can be secured within a reasonable time."

This action of the Assembly, like that of seven years earlier, in 1905, was accepted as a declaration by the Assembly of a foundation Presbyterian principle that the people are the Church, and as a pledge that only upon the condition of "practically unanimous action" of the people would "union" be attempted or sought.

Those who purposed continuing the Presbyterian Church, who knew the steadily increasing numbers sharing that purpose, and who knew that "practically unanimous action" for the extinction of that Church could not come, trusted that all attempt at such extinction would now cease and that they would be free to give themselves to the great work of the Church at home and abroad. With this halting of the movement in 1912, the first period of the twenty years' conflict comes to a close.

XII.

THE SECOND PERIOD, 1912-1917

For a year after the halting of the merger movement in 1912, at Edmonton, there was comparative peace. Presbyterians, from the vote, knew their numbers and strength and knew that strength to be increasing and, resting upon the repeated pledges of Assembly in 1905 and 1912, as to "the consent of the entire membership," and "practically unanimous action" which they knew could not come, gave themselves without anxiety to the work of the Church, in the hope that her attempted extinction was now a thing of the past.

But in 1913, at Toronto, the majority of the Assembly, urged on by "unionist" leaders, resolved to press forward "in the hope that union may be consummated with no unnecessary delay."

At that Assembly was formed the first general organization in defence of the Church. It was a simple step, simply taken, but was guided by God to grand results. During the debate a member of Assembly asked another aside and said "They are determined to drive this thing forward. Something must be done to save the Church. We must call a meeting and organize. Which will you do, find a place to meet or call the meeting?" "I'll find a place to meet," was the response. "All right, I'll call the meeting."

Nearing six o'clock that afternoon, when the vote of Assembly to press forward to "union" was announced, a call was at once given,—"Will all who wish to continue the Presbyterian Church meet at seven o'clock this evening in the hall of St. Andrew's Church, King Street West."

At seven they met, some thirty or forty. After the thronged Assembly and Congress in Massey Hall they seemed but few. To human eye the future was not rich in prospect or promise. But they knew they were right, and with quiet purpose and trust they organized to do what the

Assembly had been chosen and pledged to do, "maintain and defend" the Presbyterian Church, a trust which a majority in that Assembly had betrayed.

This was the first nation-wide organization for that purpose, and in a few weeks—"The General Committee of the Organization for the Preservation and Continuance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada"—numbered over one hundred and seventy ministers, and more than five hundred leading laymen, elders and others, some seven hundred in all, representing every considerable community from Atlantic to Pacific.

Not long thereafter was organized in Montreal, "The Women's League"—with the following statement of purpose,—

"We deeply regret that at the present time of crisis and sorrow, in the struggle to preserve our Empire, it should be necessary to take steps to preserve our Church also, but since the necessity has arisen we wish to do our part.

"We believe that unity of spirit among all Christians, and diversity of administration as may be desired, is in accord with Scripture and with the mind of Christ.

"We believe that the Presbyterian system, so long continued, so widespread throughout the world, is closely based upon Scripture, gives largest liberty to the people, and is eminently fitted to advance the kingdom of God.

"We believe that to end that system in Canada, and to accept the system proposed in the Basis of Union, would be a serious infringement of the popular rights which we now enjoy, and an undesirable increase of ecclesiastical authority.

"We believe that the best work can be accomplished by the harmonious co-operation of the existing Churches.

"We approve the Organization already in existence for the preservation and continuance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and resolve to co-operate with that Organization and to further the object it has in view."

This League extended widely, doing a splendid work in "maintaining and defending" the Presbyterian Church.

In 1914, at Woodstock, Ont., the Assembly was a repetition of the previous Assembly in Toronto, in its purpose to drive forward its coercive plan.

At this Assembly also the Presbyterians, through the entire period of the Assembly, held their own meetings in a neighboring hall, between the regular sessions of Assembly. These meetings were largely attended and were marked by purpose, confidence and enthusiasm. There was now no doubt as to the continuance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In 1915, at Kingston, Ont., the Assembly resolved to take a second vote of the people, unionist leaders pledging that "if the vote were not much more decisive in favor of union than the previous vote, the question would be "dropped."

In this connection may be quoted the words of the three Conveners of the "union committee," who held that office from 1906 to 1922, as reported in The Globe newspaper.

One of them pledged in Assembly, 1905:—"From first to last the question must be a people's question."

Another of them declared in Assembly, 1906:—"From the commencement he had put it in the forefront, that it would be utter madness to go forward to a union that did not carry the whole Church with it. It was absurd to think that the Assembly could force its will on the people."

The third said in Assembly, 1914:—"He thought the vote of the people" (the second vote) "ought to be taken. He declared that if it was proved by such a vote that a considerable minority was not in favor of union, he would regret the fact, but he would not force the issue. He went on to say that there is no such thing as attempting to force union on the Church."

With these and other like assurances, with the pledge of Assembly in 1905 that union "must carry the consent of the entire membership"; with that pledge repeated in 1910 as to "practically unanimous action," the people gave their second vote.

At the end of 1915 when this vote was taken, the reported membership including elders, was 344,740. (Assembly Minutes, 1916, page 510). Of these there voted for union 113,600, against it 73,735. (Minutes, 1916, page 279).

In the four years since the first vote at the end of 1911, the total reported membership of the Presbyterian Church in Canada had increased by about thirty-eight thousand, the vote against "union" by more than twenty-three thousand, and the vote for "union" by only six hundred.

A sample of that vote and its methods may be noted in passing. Of the 720 "congregations" reported as voting, west of the Great Lakes, 330 were missions, supported wholly or in part by the Church and under official control. Three hundred of those missions reported a larger total vote on "church union," by several hundreds, than their total reported membership published at that date in the Assembly's Statistical Tables, a testimony to the ethics of the vote where it was entirely under "unionist" official control.

With the publication of that vote Presbyterians once more breathed freely, depending upon the pledge given by the "unionist" leaders at the previous Assembly, and through the ten preceding years from 1905 to 1915. But!!!—

In 1916, at Winnipeg, on receiving and considering that second vote of the people, the majority of the Assembly, disregarding the greatly increased opposition, and all the pledges of Assembly through the years, resolved:—

1. "That the Report of the Committee on Union be received.

2. "That in accordance with its recommendations, this General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada do now resolve to unite with the Methodist Church of Canada and the Congregational Churches of Canada, to constitute 'The United Church of Canada. . . . .

3. "That this decision be formally announced to the Methodist Church of Canada and the Congregational Churches of Canada."

Thus the whole ideal of the Church was changed. The Church, formerly the people, was now "This Assembly." Thus were the people and their vote laughed to scorn. Thus were flouted as "scraps of paper"—all the pledges of Assembly as to "the consent of the entire membership" and "practically unanimous action," and the pledge and promise of "unionist" leaders before this vote was taken, that "if the vote were not much more decisive in favor of union than the previous vote, the whole question would be dropped."

If the vote of the Assembly six years previously, in Halifax, would have been incredible in a Court of the Christian Church, had it not taken place, this greatly more.

This action by a majority in the Assembly was aggravated by the time. It was in the midst of the world war. All over the land homes were in mourning for loved ones who had died for freedom, and in anxiety for those still in the struggle. And here, in an Assembly of the Christian Church, a majority drove ruthlessly through, a resolution asserting the same tyranny of "will to power," that "might makes right," which forced upon the world its greatest war, and this the worse in that it attempted to take away not merely civil but religious liberty and rights.

This second great breach of faith by a majority in the Assembly (the first had been in 1910) again aroused wide spread resentment. The Presbyterians, that autumn, held in St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, a nation-wide convocation and reorganized their defence as "The Presbyterian Church Association." It was plainly to be seen that if the attempt were pressed, disruption was certain, and many overtures were sent to next Assembly praying that such an issue might be averted.

In 1917, at Montreal, the Assembly, in face of impending division, again halted the attempted blotting out of the Presbyterian Church, and resolved:—

"That the Assembly express its sincere sympathy with the desire conveyed in many of the overtures to avoid disunion among the membership of our own Church.

"The Assembly urges that controversy on the matter of organic union be dropped by all parties,—that no attempt be made at the present time to set forth in detail the action appropriate to a future period, but that the Church patiently await the new light which it may receive by divine guidance through the growing experience of the people and the lessons of the war."

With the passing of that resolution the Assembly arose and with glad hearts sang the Doxology. It was the most impressive moment in all the twenty years of conflict, exceeded only in that respect by the midnight Assembly of June 9-10, 1925, in Knox Church, Toronto, and the grand climax, June 11, 1925, in St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, when the Presbyterian Church was finally free from the menace to her liberty and life which had so long marred her peace and hindered her progress.

With that glad doxology in the Assembly of 1917, the second period of the conflict came to an end, and Presbyterians once more cherished the fond hope of abiding peace, little dreaming that eight years had yet to pass ere the conflict for the rights of the people and freedom from attempted clerical and official domination would be won.

XIII.

THE THIRD PERIOD, 1917-1921

THESE four years were a time of peace and progress. "Then had the churches rest . . . and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

Early in this period, November 11, 1918, the world war came to an end, and in gratitude for peace in the world and in the church, the Presbyterian Church in Canada raised a special thanksgiving fund of more than five millions of dollars for the promotion of her work for the Kingdom of God.

During this period the "union committee" which had always been a storm centre of agitation for merging, and which had been in continuous existence from 1904, was allowed to lapse. No "reports of the union committee" nor appointments of a "union committee" shadowed the General Assembly during those peaceful years.

All this was taken as an additional guarantee of lasting peace. More confidently than ever before did Presbyterians hope that this menace to the freedom and life of their Church was at an end, and that henceforth they would not have to work like Nehemiah's builders "with the one hand, while the other hand held a weapon," but that heart and hands alike could be given to the work of building Zion's walls.

Swiftly, happily, prosperously for the Presbyterian Church in Canada those years ran their course. The great peace thank-offering on the one hand and the absence of coercion and strife on the other seemed fulfilment of the benediction, "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces."

XIV.

THE FOURTH PERIOD, 1921-1925

In 1921, at Toronto, a majority in the Assembly following the urge of the "union" leaders, without any previous notice to the Church, and without any attempt to find out, as pledged in 1917, "the leadings of Providence in the experience of the people and the lessons of the war"—resolved—"that the union be consummated as expeditiously as possible," and appointed a Committee to "explore the legal questions involved" and report to next Assembly. The "exploring" consisted on preparing for Parliament the Bill which was intended to blot out forever in Canada the Presbyterian Church.

In 1922, at Winnipeg, the "Union Committee" reported progress in its "exploration" and asked to be continued to further "explore," which, as in the previous Assembly, was a fiction, for a few weeks later the completed Bill, in which the Presbyterian "union committee" had its share, was presented to the Dominion Methodist Conference and adopted by it without being reported to Assembly.

In 1923, at Port Arthur, that "church union" Bill, adopted the previous year by the Dominion Methodist Conference, was presented to the Assembly. The "basis of union" had been changed since it was formally sent down to presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and thus, even if it had been competent to the Assembly and to presbyteries it would now be illegal. But such trifles mattered not to its proponents. Moreover, there was now the added urge that the Methodist Conference had adopted it and that the Assembly must adopt it as it stood. There could be no further change. "It must go forward."

Presbyterians at that Assembly asked the fair play of a vote by ballot in the Assembly, so that ministers and elders representing home mission fields or aid-receiving congregations, whose appointment and support were under official

control, might be free to vote without constraint. This was denied and "church union" was driven through by force of numbers and intimidation.

In 1924, at Owen Sound, the same procedure, if possible more drastic and relentless, was repeated.

In 1924, in Ottawa, the combined Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational "unionist" political forces drove through the Parliament of Canada one of the most unjust measures in the annals of Canadian Parliamentary history, sanctioning the confiscation of the church homes and possessions of the Presbyterian people unless they would give up their Church and their religious liberty and their convictions of right.

But unjust as was the Bill passed by Parliament, it had less of cold, cruel tyranny than was demanded of Parliament by some officials of the Churches. The Bill as presented to Parliament by the latter provided that all the members of the Presbyterian Church be placed by civil law in the new Church and given six months to vote themselves out again as best they might. Parliament refused so heinous an Act, but gave six months before June 10, 1925, in which congregations might vote by majority not to enter that Church.

At this third vote of the people by congregations, the total membership voting for "union," omitting the odd hundreds, was 113,000, as in the previous votes. The total membership voting against it was 114,000. These figures are based upon returns received at the offices of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In round thousands, omitting the odd hundreds, the three votes of the people for "union" in 1911, 1915, 1924, were one hundred and thirteen thousand.

The three votes of the people to "maintain and defend" the Presbyterian Church, in 1911, 1915, 1924, were fifty thousand, seventy-three thousand, and one hundred and fourteen thousand; the last vote being the only vote on the Bill before Parliament.

In 1925, at Toronto, the Assembly met June 3. That Assembly had been openly "packed." For example, the Presbytery of Montreal, the second largest presbytery in the Church, with a large proportion of its people opposed to the extinction of the Presbyterian Church, departed from its standing rule of sending most of its commissioners by rotation, in order of their names on the roll of presbytery, which would have given that presbytery several commissioners in Assembly opposed to the merger, and it openly resolved to send as commissioners "only those in favor of union." The Presbytery of Montreal was not alone in such dishonorable and shameless procedure.

The Assembly, thus packed, after about one week in session, on the afternoon of June 9, 1925, resolved, by majority, to adjourn to meet a fortnight later unless, in the meantime, its rights should cease, which was plainly a subterfuge to wipe out the Presbyterian Church.

But seventy-nine members of Assembly, in spite of the packing (forty members is a quorum), entered their protest and claim of right, prior to the adjournment, and immediately, on that adjournment, they reconstituted the Assembly and continued in session, while those who withdrew from that Assembly, joined, the following day, "The United Church of Canada," the new denomination created by Parliament, and had no more part nor lot in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. That Church was at last free from their menace from within. They could henceforth harass and hinder her only from without.

XV.

THE CRISIS IN ASSEMBLY

THREE notable successive sessions of the General Assembly of 1925, in three different churches in Toronto, on three successive days, marked the crisis of the twenty years' conflict, the final failure of the attempt to take from the Presbyterians in Canada their liberties and rights, the disappointed exit of that attempt from the Presbyterian General Assembly, the glad deliverance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada from the nightmare of a score of years and her joyous thanksgiving as she entered once more her heritage of freedom. These three sessions of Assembly were unique, each in its own way, none like them heretofore in that Church's history.

The first of these three notable sessions of that notable Assembly has been already mentioned in the previous chapter. It was on the afternoon of June 9, in College Street Church, where the Assembly had been in session for the preceding week.

As the Act of Parliament creating the United Church of Canada had ordered the first General Council of that Church to hold its first meeting on the following day, June 10, and as some in the Presbyterian Assembly had declared their purpose of entering that Church, their final opportunity for attempt at the extinction of the Presbyterian Church was at this afternoon session of the Assembly. Tomorrow they would be no longer in the Presbyterian Church,

The attempt was as follows. Towards the close of this session came a motion that "when this Assembly adjourns, this afternoon, it do adjourn to meet . . . the twenty-fourth day of June, 1925" (a fortnight later), "unless in the meantime its rights, privileges, authorities and powers shall have ceased, under the terms of . . . the United Church of Canada Act . . ." "it being well understood that its rights would cease and that the adjourned meeting would not

take place." This latter quotation is from "The New Outlook," the official organ of "The United Church."

A respectful protest against such adjournment, with its object of blotting out the Presbyterian Church, and a claim of right by seventy-nine members of that Assembly (forty is a quorum) to continue in session as the same Assembly of the same Church, was handed to the moderator, and permission asked to read a copy of it to the Assembly. This was refused, but lengthy addresses in opposition to that protest were permitted and loudly cheered.

When the moderator pronounced the benediction and declared the Assembly closed, the seventy-nine loyal members immediately chose one of their number, an ex-moderator, to preside, and, amid the thunders of the organ, which blared its loudest to drown the proceedings, the Assembly was re-constituted with prayer, and then adjourned to meet at 11.45 that same night in Knox Church.

The closing scenes of that session of Assembly, the unworthy pretence of adjournment—"until the 24th"—"it being well understood that the adjourned meeting would not take place"—the refusal to allow the reading of a respectful protest, which was a right,—and when the Assembly was being re-constituted with prayer, the unseemly din of talk and laughter, by unionist groups, with well-known clerical figures urging the organist to his loudest, until the prayer was ended, when urge and organ ceased, were a fitting climax to the long course of disregard for all but the attainment of its end which for years had marked the "union" movement, and formed a fitting farewell by that movement as it finally withdrew in disappointed failure from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

On the evening of that same day, June 9, long before the appointed hour, throngs gathered in Knox Church for the second notable session of that notable Assembly, and a prayer service was held continuously for nearly two hours until 11.45 p.m. when the Assembly was constituted and con-

tinued in session over the midnight into the beginning of June 10.

That midnight hour, when, by "unionist" prophecy and proclamation, the Presbyterian Church in Canada was to disappear, to be "merged," swallowed up, so that it "would cease to exist," found that Church more alive with determined purpose than at any previous hour in her history, with her General Assembly in session in a noble edifice, thronged to the doors by ministers, elders and members of that Church from all over Canada.

That midnight session of Assembly takes place among unique events in Church history. The time, the occasion, the Church that it represented, the Presbyterian Church of half a continent, all that it meant of struggle in the past and outlook for the future,—the attendance, the deep earnestness, the felt presence of the Unseen, made it ever memorable to all who were privileged to share that "watch-night" of the ages. The Presbyterian Church in Canada was coming triumphant through the greatest crisis in her history, with songs of thankful praise to Him who had led her all the way and to whom she anew dedicated herself in those still midnight hours of her new life.

After a period of worship, the reading of the protest and claim of right to the great congregation, and a few items of business, the Assembly again adjourned in the early hours of the morning, to meet the following day.

The third of the three notable successive sessions of that notable Assembly of 1925 was in St. Andrew's Church, June 11. Here had been formed, twelve years previously, in 1913, the first organization to "maintain and defend" the Presbyterian Church against betrayal by the majority in her own Assembly. Here that defence had been reorganized three years later, in 1916, as "The Presbyterian Church Association." Here the General Assembly, once more Presbyterian and free, now met to face the duties of the present and to plan for the future.

The Crisis in Assembly

If the watchnight session in Knox Church was solemn and impressive, because of the time and occasion, a great Church in the still midnight hour passing through the greatest crisis in her history, the jubilee session in St. Andrew's Church, June 11, could also claim pre-eminence as larger in membership than any other previous General Assembly of the Church, and, beyond any other, vibrant with joy—the crisis past, truth and liberty triumphant, and the way open to take up once more its work for the Kingdom of God.

The Assembly, since the withdrawal of a majority of its members to another Church, two days previously, had consisted of the seventy-nine ministers and elders who continued in Session after that withdrawal.

But the real representative constituency of the Presbyterian Church in her higher church courts is the minister and an elder from each congregation. There were present hundreds thus chosen and commissioned by interim "Presbyterial Advisory Councils" all over Canada, and the first business after opening sermon was a resolution by the seventy-nine commissioners already sitting, that all ministers present, in good standing in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and an elder from each congregation should constitute the Assembly.

This made it in very deed a "General Assembly," representing the whole Church, and not a selective Assembly representing the presbyteries, and made it also the largest Assembly in the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Next came the election of moderator, as the one chosen eight days previously at the opening of the Assembly, on June 3, had withdrawn to another denomination, and had no more place or part in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. This election was quickly over as there was but one nomination, and the Assembly addressed itself to a week of further work with a freedom and gladness long unknown.

XVI.

THE BILL IN PARLIAMENT.

THE "Church Union Bill" in Parliament, in 1924, is a moving picture in four films,—the Bill as it came to Parliament, those who brought it to Parliament, those who passed it in Parliament, and the Bill as it came from Parliament, "The United Church of Canada Act."

The first film, the Bill as it came to Parliament, was unconstitutional, having no right in that form to be there. Parliament had the right and power to incorporate a new Church for any who might desire it, but had no right or power to "merge," wind up or wipe out the Presbyterian Church. That Church is not a body corporate. It cannot sue or be sued. It has no legal entity or identity which Parliament can touch. It is simply a voluntary fellowship of those who have declared their adherence to certain truths and principles, and it exists only when and where there is a fellowship professing acceptance of those principles and adherence to them. But though unconstitutional, some features of that Bill may be noted.

One feature was its tyranny, its provision that the entire Presbyterian Church in Canada, willing or unwilling, and against the declared convictions of scores of thousands of its members, should, by Act of Parliament, be placed within the new denomination to be created by Parliament, and left to get themselves out as best they might. For arbitrary, unchristian denial of religious liberty that provision of the Bill takes rank with like coercive measures in centuries long gone. It could not today be enforced with the pains and penalties of the past, the dungeon, rack, and stake, but its attempted deprivation of religious liberty, its claim to absolute power over the religious convictions of others and its callous disregard of those convictions, was equal to anything in the past.

As if to emphasize that tyranny and remind Pres-

byterian people of their spiritual serfdom, there was a provision in the Bill as it came to Parliament that while they would be driven into that new Church by civil law, regardless of their convictions, they would be graciously permitted for a period of six months thereafter to vote themselves out again by congregations, if they could do so, into what the promoters of the Bill in their leaflet literature termed "visionless isolation."

In view of that feature of the Bill, one can better understand how the churchmen of three centuries ago could calmly urge and use the thumbscrew and boot, the match and torch, in attempt to coerce men and women, against their convictions of right, into any "religio-political" organization which might at the time be dominant.

A second feature on the face of that Bill as it came to Parliament was its dishonesty. It provided for the confiscation of all endowments and bequests held in trust by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, for colleges and other purposes, which had been definitely given and bequeathed for teaching the religious truths to which that Church is pledged, and which had been guaranteed by the laws of the land as safeguarded to the end for which they had been bequeathed. The appointment of a Commission for dividing that property was a dishonest confiscation of trusts belonging to the Presbyterian Church.

A third feature on the face of that Bill as it came to Parliament was its autocratic presumption in demanding that not the people but the clergy and officials should henceforth be the Church, with supreme power to do with the Church what they might choose, while the people, no longer the Church, are ranked with the pews, footstools and collection plates, to be transferred to "any other Church or religious denomination," old or new, at official will.

These clergy and officials do not even limit their demand to any other "Christian" denomination, but seek power to "unite" the church "with any other church or religious denomination," a power which would include Buddhist,

Confucian, Moslem or Mormon. They ask in that Bill for power unlimited over the Church.

In that Bill, with such provision for limitless autocratic change, the people are not supposed to have any mind or will or choice. "Theirs not to make reply; theirs not to reason why," theirs only to work, pray, pay and obey. As a "unionist" minister said to an elder who spoke of conscientious convictions against blotting out the Presbyterian Church, "Your conscientious convictions have nothing to do with it. Your duty is what your spiritual adviser tells you." Degradation of the people to unquestioning vassalage and serfdom in the Church, and clerical and official despotic domination over the Church could not well be more complete.

A fourth feature of that first film, the Bill as it came to Parliament, was its absurdity. That Bill declares that the "Union. . . . shall become effective" on a given date and the three Churches shall constitute a "body corporate and politic. . . . the United Church. . . " and everything connected with those three Churches shall be "merged" in that new corporation,—and then it goes on to provide that members of congregations who, within six months thereafter, shall vote by majority not to enter that corporation, "shall not be deemed to have become members of the United Church." A man hanged by process of law, shall not be deemed to have been hanged! That Bill claims to merge the three Churches, and to form of them "one body corporate and politic," and then makes provision whereby not a single congregation or member of any of the Churches need be a part of that body. A "body corporate" without a body!

The second film of that moving picture shows the parties who had the Bill prepared and were pressing it upon Parliament.

The Presbyterians among them had, on their own application, been appointed as keepers, guardians, in their

Church, watchmen upon her walls, and had taken a solemn oath—"to maintain and defend" the same, and "to follow no divisive course from the present order established therein."

On taking that oath they had been entrusted with the care of the Church and of the trusts bequeathed for her work; and now, while still holding office under oath, as keepers and guardians of that Church and of the trust funds committed to it, they are here before Parliament pressing their Bill to blot out the Church which they had vowed "to maintain and defend" and to confiscate those trusts and give them to others.

It was, therefore, not a matter for surprise to hear a prominent leader among them, before the private bills Committee of Parliament, in presence of a large audience of members of Parliament and others, of different denominations and faiths, holding up to ridicule the Standards, the religious beliefs and teachings of the Presbyterian Church which he had publicly accepted and had vowed before God to "maintain and defend"; and to hear another of them assent to the suggestion that he had taken his ordination vows "with mental reservation."

The third film in that moving picture is the Parliament which passed the Bill. Many members of that Parliament, of different parties and faiths, stood manfully for justice and right. Some weakly absented themselves at the vote. A majority of those who voted, from east of the Great Lakes, the chief part of the Church, voted against the Bill. The total membership in Parliament from east of the Lakes, representing the great body of the Church, was one hundred and seventy-eight. Of these fifty voted for the Bill and fifty-three against it. But a small political bloc from west of the Lakes, a bloc in which there were scarcely any Presbyterians, voted solidly for the Bill and drove it through.

By this narrow political majority from west of the Lakes was the Presbyterian Church in Canada permitted to be robbed of her church homes, possessions and rights.

The Bill in Parliament

The fourth film in that Ottawa picture is the Bill as it came from Parliament. Many of its ill features remain. Some of them are changed. It has no longer the specially tyrannous provision that all shall be placed by law within the new church, with six months to vote out if they can.

It now provides that six months before the Act becomes effective, on June 10, 1925, congregations may vote by majority whether they will enter the new denomination. Even seasoned politicians who, under "religio-political" pressure, had retained in the Bill so much that was iniquitous, shrank from the needless tyranny urged upon them by the sponsors and promoters of that Bill.

Viewing the Bill, as it came from Parliament, "The United Church Act," some features of it, confirmed and carried out by the provincial legislatures, which control church buildings and properties, are:—

First, its continued injustice. It sanctions the penalizing of scores of thousands of Presbyterians, taking from them their church homes and possessions because they would not consent to surrender their life-long religious principles and convictions at the bidding of a clerical and official autocracy which had no right or power to demand or command such surrender, and which, in doing so, was violating its own pledges and obligations. Did ever a majority, large or small, in any other modern parliament, so prostitute itself as a tool of ecclesiastical tyranny?

A second feature of that Bill as it came from Parliament is its continued dishonesty. It deliberately sanctions the confiscation of sacred trusts which have been left through a century past, under guarantee and pledge of government that these trusts would be safeguarded to the end for which they were given, the promotion of the religious beliefs to which the Presbyterian Church is pledged.

What a spectacle! The guardians of sacred trusts, pledged by solemn oath to their safe keeping, betraying their trust, and demanding that these trusts be diverted to

others! And a majority in parliament, the sworn guarantors of those trusts, assenting to that dishonesty! If any private guardians or guarantors in Canada today were to deal with trusts in a similar way they would soon be behind prison bars.

A third feature of that Bill as it came from Parliament is its continued absurdity and self-contradiction. It states that "the said Churches . . . . are hereby constituted a body corporate . . . . The United Church," and then it makes provision whereby not a congregation or member of any of the three Churches need enter that new denomination unless they choose so to do. It incorporates a new Church, authorizes its doctrine and polity, and then makes provision whereby that Church need not have a single member, nor a dollar of property.

Most marvellous of all, a majority in Parliament professes to pass the Act and then states that it does not know whether it had a right to pass it, or how much or how little of that Act it has sanctioned. The closing paragraph of the "United Church Act" is as follows:

"Inasmuch as questions have arisen or may arise, as to the powers of the Parliament of Canada, under the British North America Act, to give legislative effect to the provisions of this Act, it is hereby declared that it is intended by this Act to sanction the provisions contained therein, in so far and in so far only, as it is competent to the Parliament so to do."

When the Bill was before the Private Bills Committee of Parliament, one of the members of that Committee proposed an amendment which would have removed all difficulties and doubts. He moved that the Act he referred to the civil courts, to decide whether it was constitutional, whether Parliament had the right or power to pass such an Act, and promised that if those courts should declare it constitutional it would be allowed to pass in Parliament without opposition.

But although this amendment passed the Private Bills Committee, by a vote of twenty-seven to twenty-three, the

"unionists" all voted against it and then combined and killed it in Parliament, the only amendment to the Bill that was not allowed to pass, showing that they knew it to be unconstitutional, and would not risk asking the courts. But they pass the Act and then add the above remarkable clause at the end of it, a clause the like of which perhaps never before appeared in a parliamentary Act.

In that final clause of the Act, Parliament says, in effect, of itself and of the "United Church of Canada Act,"—"We have passed this Act but we do not know whether we had the right or power to pass it, or how much or how little of it we had the right or power to pass."

"We have passed it all but we have not sanctioned it all, and we do not know how much or how little of it we have sanctioned. We have sanctioned only so much of it as we had a right to sanction, but we do not know how much or how little of it that may be. Whether all of it, some of it, or none of it is law, we do not know, therefore:—"It is hereby declared that it is intended by this Act to sanction the provisions contained therein, in so far, and so far only, as it is competent to the Parliament so to do."

XVII.

PARLIAMENT AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The promoters of the United Church of Canada Act, sometimes claim that Parliament, in that Act, placed the Presbyterian Church in Canada within the United Church and that it is now within the United Church because Parliament placed it there.

As shown elsewhere, had Parliament attempted such legislation it would have been unconstitutional, beyond its right and power. But admitting for the moment that Parliament had the constitutional right to legislate the Presbyterian Church in Canada out of existence, or into another Church, a study of the Act shows that Parliament did not attempt to exercise such a right.

Parliament did two things which might and did affect the Presbyterian Church. One was that it created a new corporation, the United Church of Canada, into which any from the Presbyterian Church (as from the other Churches) might enter if they so desired. The other thing was that, subject to the action of the provincial legislatures, it authorized the promoters of that new corporation to seize the church homes and possessions of Presbyterians, wherever, in a congregation, those promoters were in a majority. But Parliament did not do anything directly to or with the Presbyterian Church.

The United Church Act is self contradictory, owing in part to the effort of Parliament to please everybody, and in part to the fact that when the Bill came to Parliament it provided that the Presbyterian Church and everything connected therewith should be placed within the United Church, and when Parliament refused to sanction that provision of the Bill, some sections adapted to that provision were left unchanged.

But though the Act is self contradictory, it does not place—and does not attempt to place—the Presbyterian

Church in Canada within the United Church, as will be seen from a brief study of its provisions.

The title of the Act is—"An Act incorporating The United Church of Canada."

The preamble to the Act is, in part,—"Whereas the Presbyterian Church in Canada, The Methodist Church and The Congregational Churches of Canada have by their petition represented that . . . . . they . . . . . have agreed to unite and form one body or denomination . . . . . under the name of The United Church of Canada, and have prayed that it may be enacted as hereinafter set forth; and whereas it is expedient to grant the prayer of said petition: Therefore, His Majesty, by and with advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows."

Then follows the Act, the above being simply preamble and not a part of the Act. Some sections of that Act are the following:—

"1. This Act may be cited as 'The United Church of Canada Act.'

"2. This Act shall come into force on the tenth day of June, 1925."

"4. (a) The union of the said Churches, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Methodist Church and The Congregational Churches, shall become effective upon the day upon which this Act comes into force, and the said Churches, as so united, are hereby constituted a body corporate and politic under the name of 'The United Church of Canada,' hereinafter called 'The United Church.'

"(b) The several corporations referred to in subsections (e) (f) and (g) of section three hereof, are hereby merged in the United Church and the congregations referred to in subsection (a) of said section three, are hereby admitted to and declared to be congregations of the United Church." (Note—The subsections of section three refer to incorporated boards, or co-operating congregations, within any of the Churches.)

"(c) Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained,

members of any non-concurring congregations hereinafter mentioned shall be deemed not to have become, by virtue of the said union or of this Act, members of The United Church.

"(d) Any minister of the negotiating Churches may, within six months after the coming into force of this Act, notify the clerk or secretary of the General Council, in writing, of his intention not to become a minister of the United Church, and in such event he shall be deemed not to have become, by virtue of the said union or of this Act, a minister of the United Church.

"(e) Any member of the negotiating Churches may, within six months after coming into force of this Act, notify in writing the clerk of session or recording steward . . . . . or secretary . . . . . as the case may be, of the congregation of which he is a member, of his intention not to become a member of the United Church, and in such event he . . . . . shall be deemed not to have become by virtue of the said union or of this Act, a member of the United Church."

"10. (a) If any congregation in connection or communion with any of the negotiating Churches shall, at a meeting of the congregation regularly called and held at any time within six months before the coming into force of this Act . . . . . decide by a majority of votes of the persons present at such meeting, and entitled to vote thereat, not to enter the said union of the said churches, then and in such case, the property, real and personal belonging to or held in trust for or to the use of such non-concurring congregation shall remain unaffected by this Act . . . . . .

"11. (a) Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, such non-concurring congregations, or any one or more of then, as may be determined, shall be entitled to whatever the Commission hereinafter mentioned, shall determine to be a fair and equitable share of the property, real or personal, rights, power, authorities and privileges of or in connection with the respective parent Church or Churches."

In this last quoted section, if no Presbyterians should enter the United Church then no division of the general property would be "fair and equitable," and, as the Act provides for all the Presbyterians remaining out if they wish, it provides for all their property remaining out.

The United Church Act, as already stated, is self-contradictory, but the above sections of it show clearly that it provides for the Presbyterian Church, as for other Churches:—

1. That any or all of the members of the Presbyterian Church may enter the United Church or remain out of it as they may choose.
2. That any or all of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church may enter the United Church or remain out of it as they may choose.
3. That every congregation of the Presbyterian Church may enter the United Church or remain out of it as that congregation may choose.
4. That the church homes and possessions of any or all of the congregations in the Presbyterian Church may be taken into the United Church or remain in the Presbyterian Church, as the people of those congregations may choose.
5. That every dollar of the general property and endowment funds of the Presbyterian Church may be taken into the United Church or remain in the Presbyterian Church as the people of that Church may choose.

If, therefore, the Act provides that every congregation, minister and member, every church building and every dollar of the general funds of the Presbyterian Church, every thing that goes to make up the Presbyterian Church in Canada, need not be affected by the United Church Act, but may remain unaffected by that Act, how could these same things be placed by that Act within the United Church?

Those who make such a claim have evidently not only, as claimed by themselves, a new theology, but a new geometry, with its axiom, "Things that are equal to the same thing are not equal to one another."

XVIII.

"TOOK ALL THE CONSTITUTIONAL STEPS"

This has been a constant claim for the past decade by those who had been entrusted as guardians of the Presbyterian Church, on their solemn vow to "maintain and defend the same," and who, instead of keeping that vow, betrayed their trust, and used their positions, as guardians of the church, in attempt to blot out the Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian principles and ideals from Canada's religious life.

The claim "We have taken all the constitutional steps" may have two possible meanings. It may mean that there are no "constitutional steps" for the extinction of the Presbyterian Church, and we have taken them all, which is absurdly true. Or it may mean that there are "constitutional steps" for "maintaining and defending" that Church, for promoting the life and work of that Church, and "we have taken them" and misused them for the extinction of that Church, which is all too sadly true.

There were four Constitutions affected by the attempted extinction of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and that attempt violated them all.

A first Constitution violated was that of the Presbyterian Church. The two great articles of doctrine, or religious belief and teaching, in that Constitution are:—

"The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, being the Word of God, are the only infallible rule of faith and manners."

"The Westminster Confession of Faith shall form the Subordinate Standard of this Church, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms shall be adopted by the Church to be used for the instruction of the people."

The polity of that Constitution is as follows:— "The government and worship of this Church shall be in accordance with the recognized principles and practice of the

Presbyterian Churches as laid down generally in the "Form of Presbyterian Church Government" and in "The Directory for the Public Worship of God."

To this Constitution every minister and elder at ordination pledges himself by solemn vows, three of which are:—

1. "Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and manners?"

2. "Do you believe the Westminster Confession of Faith as adopted by this Church . . . . . to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and do you promise faithfully to adhere thereto?"

3. "Do you believe the Government of this Church by Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assembly, to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and do you engage as a minister (or ruling elder) of this Church, to maintain and defend the same?"

In addition to the above ordination vows, for ministers and elders alike, every minister at ordination or reception, and also at every subsequent induction is required to sign the following formula:—

"I, A—B—, hereby declare that I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith, as adopted by this Church . . . and the Government of this Church by Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, that I own the purity of worship at present authorized by this Church, and that I engage to adhere faithfully to the doctrine of the said Confession, to maintain and defend the said government, to conform to the said worship, to submit to the discipline of this Church and to follow no divisive course from the present order established therein."

There is no provision of any kind in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in Canada for the extinction of that Church. Its every provision is for the continuance of that Church.

"Took all the Constitutional Steps"

The Presbyterian Church, in addition to its Constitution, has rules and laws for guiding its affairs within and subject to that Constitution, rules for "maintaining and defending" the Church as thus constituted.

The recent attempt upon the life of the Church took those rules and laws which were made for keeping and guarding and guiding the Church and used them in attempt to blot out the Church. Those making that attempt "took all the constitutional steps" of the Church and misused them for violating the Constitution of the Church and their own vows to "maintain and defend" that Constitution.

A second Constitution violated by Parliament in sanctioning the confiscation of Presbyterian trusts and the seizure of Presbyterian church homes was the Constitution of Canada. That Constitution is the British North America Act, which guarantees religious liberty to all. Any Act of the Canadian Parliament which permits penalty upon any for refusing to change their faith, is a violation of that British North America Act, and hence a violation of the Constitution of Canada.

One of the loudest and most continuous cries of the attempted merging was that everything in that attempt was "constitutional." And yet the action of its leaders showed that they knew the cry to be untrue. When the "Church Union Bill" was before the Private Bills Committee of Parliament, a member of that Committee proposed an amendment, to refer that Bill to the civil courts for their judgment as to its constitutionality, promising that if those courts should declare it constitutional, all opposition to it in Parliament would be withdrawn and it would be allowed to pass without opposition.

The promoters of the Bill would not accept that offer, but with one accord opposed it. And though the Committee on Bills passed that amendment by a vote of twenty-seven to twenty-three, the "unionists" all voted against it and rallied their forces and defeated it in Parliament. It was

the only amendment to the "Church Union Bill" which failed to pass in Parliament, showing their determination, at all costs, to prevent its submission to the civil courts, which were the only authority as to its constitutionality, showing more plainly than words could do that while declaring it constitutional they did not believe it so.

The third Constitution violated by the attempt to merge the Presbyterian Church was the Moral Law. That such was the case needs no further proof than the facts of the past twenty years, the vows broken, the pledges and agreements unkept, the misrepresentations made and the methods used in the attempt to blot out the Presbyterian Church from the page of Canada's future history.

The fourth Constitution violated by that attempt was the foundation principle of Christianity, the law of Christ, the law of love.

Presbyterians sought to coerce no others. They gave fullest liberty to all others to make for themselves any desired change. They simply claimed the right to remain in their own Church to which they and others were pledged, and where they believed it their duty and for them the will of God that they should continue.

"Unionists" were free to go into any other type of church they might desire. But, not content with that, they sought by physical force, by civil law, by Act of Parliament, to compel Presbyterians out of their Church, and though in that they failed, they succeeded in taking from many of them their church homes because they would not give up their convictions of right.

This was clearly a violation of the highest of all Constitutions, the law of Christian love, the law of Christ. No man is living the law of Christ who attempts to wrong another or to compel that other to do what he believes to be wrong, so long as that other does not interfere with rights beyond his own.

XIX.

OPINIONS OF BRITISH JUDGES

At the union in Scotland, in 1900, forming the United Free Church, a small part of the Free Church declined to enter that new Church and remained as previously, claiming to be the Free Church of Scotland, with the right to care for its trusts and possessions.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in 1904, fully sustained their claim. Part of the property was afterwards given by the British Parliament to the United Free Church, solely and only because the continuing Free Church was too small to manage all that property to advantage.

That Scottish case, entitled "The Free Church vs. Overtoun," was one of the most important ever decided by a British court. Among the judges who sat in the case were Lord Chancellor Halsbury, Lord Alverstone and other noted jurists.

The decision of the Lords, as to property rights, in that Scottish case in 1904, bears very directly upon the recent attempt at legalizing the robbery of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The following are extracts from the deliverances of some of the judges constituting that highest Court of the British Empire.

Lord Chancellor Halsbury, page 612, said:—"Speaking generally, one would say that the identity of a religious community described as a Church must consist in the unity of its doctrine. Its creeds, confessions, formularies, tests, and so forth are apparently intended to ensure the unity of the faith which its adherents profess, and certainly among all Christian Churches the essential idea of a creed or confession of faith appears to be the public acknowledgment of such and such religious views as the bond of union which binds them together as one Christian community.

"A Court of law has nothing to do with the soundness or unsoundness of a particular doctrine. Assuming there is nothing unlawful in the views held . . . . . a Court has simply to ascertain what was the original purpose of the trust. I do not think we have any right to speculate as to what is or is not important in the views held. The question is what were in fact, the views held, and what the founders of the trust thought important."

Lord Halsbury, page 617:—"It may be laid down that no question of the majority of persons can affect the question, but the original purposes of the trust must be the guide."

At page 622 Lord Halsbury referred to the Presbyterian Standards as follows:—"Indeed, it may be said of the Westminster Confession as a whole that it was composed with a deliberate and careful scrutiny which may be regarded as hardly equalled in any theological discussion."

Lord Halsbury, page 626:—"My Lords, apart from some mysterious and subtle meaning to be attached to the word 'Church,' and understanding it to mean an associated body of Christian believers, I do not suppose that anybody will dispute the right of any man, or any collection of men, to change their religious beliefs according to their own consciences; but when men subscribe money for a particular object and leave it behind them for the promotion of that object, their successors have no right to change the object endowed.

"There is nothing in calling an associated body a Church that exempts it from the legal obligation of insisting that money given for one purpose shall not be devoted to another.

"But there is another and a further ground upon which I think the appellants" (the continuing Free Church) "are entitled to succeed, and that is that the so-called union is not really a union of religious belief at all. The united body has united in its organizations. It has established its various administrative arrangements, had declared its authority as the United Free Church, and in that name has absorbed

the various bodies of the United Presbyterians and the Free Church as originally constituted; but has it agreed in the doctrines of either of them, and if so, which is it that has given way?

"My Lords, I am bound to say that after the most careful examination of the various documents submitted to us, I cannot trace the least evidence of either of them having abandoned their original views.

"It is not the case of two associated bodies of Christians in complete harmony as to their doctrine agreeing to share their funds, but two bodies each agreeing to keep their separate religious views where they differ—agreeing to make their formularies so elastic as to admit those who accept them according as their respective consciences will permit.

"Assuming, as I do, that there are differences of belief between them, these differences are not got rid of by their agreeing to say nothing about them, nor are these essentially diverse views avoided by selecting so elastic a formulary as can be accepted by people who differ and say that they claim their liberty to retain their differences while purporting to join in one Christian Church.

"It becomes but a colourable union, and no trust fund devoted to one form of faith can be shared by another communion simply because they say in effect there are some parts of this or that confession which we will agree not to discuss, and we will make our formularies such that either of us can accept it.

"Such an agreement would not, in my view, constitute a Church at all, or it would be, to use Sir William Smith's phrase, a Church without a religion. Its formularies would be designed, not to be a confession of faith but a concealment of such part of the faith as constituted an impediment to the union."

Lord Davey, page 650, pointed out that there was nothing in the Constitution of the Free Church that recognized the existence of a power in the General Assembly to

impose new doctrines on the Church, and he pointed out that the Barrier Act (which was relied on in support of the right of the Assembly to make such changes) was a Procedure Act and not an Enabling Act, and that it did not purpose to confer any new powers whatever, but merely to regulate the exercise of such powers as the General Assembly may possess, and he pointed out that it would be contradictory to all principle to infer from the provisions of the Barrier Act a power in the General Assembly or the majority, to vary the trusts upon which properties are held, to the prejudice of a dissentient minority.

Lord James, page 662:—"Entertaining these different views, the Free Church and the United Presbyterians have taken steps, seemingly correct in form, to become united under the name of the United Free Church.

"And this union is sought by the majority who support it to be imposed on the minority who object to become members of the new United Church, and to take effect upon property held by the Free Church so as to transfer it to the new body, the United Church . . . . .

"From this view I differ, because, regarding 'essential' as meaning fundamental, I do not think that a Church can change such fundamental principle and yet at the same time preserve its identity."

Lord Robertson, page 670:—"The adherents of the appellants"—(the "Wee Frees")—"are numerically few—some few thousands—but it has not been suggested that this introduces any legal difference from the situation as it would have been had they been more numerous. Since the days of Cyrus it has been held that justice is done by giving people, not what fits them, but what belongs to them."

Lord Lindley, page 695, speaking of the powers of synods or councils to modify doctrines, said:—"I take it to be clear that there is a condition implied in this as well as in other instruments which create powers, namely, that

the powers shall be used bona fide for the purposes for which they are conferred.

"If, therefore, a synod or council, under colour of exercising their authority, were to destroy the Church which they were appointed to preserve, or were to abrogate the doctrines which they were appointed to maintain, their acts would be ultra vires and invalid in point of law; and it would be the duty of every Court in the United Kingdom so to hold if the question ever involved a controversy as to civil rights and so arose for judicial decision."

Lord Alverstone, page 704 said:—"The law applicable to funds which have been given for the purpose of a voluntary association such as the Free Church is well settled, and it is not necessary for me to do more than refer to the decision of your Lordships' House in Craigdallie v. Aikman to shew that such funds, in the absence of express provision, must be applied for the benefit of those who adhere to the original principles of the founders."

Lord Alverstone, page 721:—"I am unable to support a judgment which would deprive the persons forming a minority of their rights simply upon the grounds that they are unwilling to become members of a body which has not only abandoned a fundamental principle of the Church to which they belong, but supports a principle essentially different from that on which that Church was founded."

In that Scottish Union of 1900, upon which the above judgments were given, the two uniting Churches, while both Presbyterian, had in their statements of belief some points of unlikeness to each other and to the new United Free Church. Hence the judgment of Britain's highest Court of Appeal, that the property which had been committed in trust to the care of the Free Church should continue in the care of those who continued in all respects the statements of belief of that Free Church.

That Scottish Church Union of 1900 was thus unlike the union of Presbyterians in Canada in 1875. In the

latter the four uniting Churches were identical in doctrine and polity with each other, and the new Presbyterian Church in Canada, formed by their union, was identical with each of them. The judgment of that highest British Court would therefore have no application to such a case.

But in the recent attempted church merging in Canada there were wide differences, in declared acceptance of doctrine and polity, in the three Churches which that attempt sought to merge, and the proposed new Church differed from each of them. The judgment, therefore, of that highest Court of Appeal in the Empire, declaring the small continuing Free Church the rightful trustee of the property and trusts of the Free Church, would have manifold greater application to the large continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada as the rightful custodian of its own property and trusts.

XX.

A CANADIAN LEGAL OPINION

Eugene Lafleur, K.C., addressing the Private Bills Committee of the House of Commons in Ottawa, in 1924, on the "Church Union Bill," said in part:—

"I appear, with Mr. Chrysler and Mr. Campbell, for the Presbyterian Church Association.

"The aim of this Association . . . . is the maintenance and preservation of the historic Church in which its members and their forefathers have worshipped, and in which they wish to continue to worship . . . . .

"At the very threshold of this inquiry you are faced with the objection to the preamble which appears to me to be fatal to the Bill, because the preamble asserts that the negotiating Churches have a right to unite with one another if you pass this legislation in section 27:—

" 'That the Union has been formed by the free and independent action of the said Churches, through their governing bodies and in accordance with their respective constitutions.'

"That declaration is not proved . . . . . I assert with confidence that within the Presbyterian Church there is no power given to the church courts, and to the highest of the church courts, the General Assembly, to put an end to this Church.

"You may put the legislative power of the General Assembly as high as you like. You may say it can legislate in matters respecting doctrine, as the Blue Book says, but there is no warrant for Assembly that that legislative power extends to the destruction of the Church. It is a power given to those who are administering the Church. It is a power for the maintenance of the Presbyterian Church, and its preservation, but not for its annihilation.

"Now if there is one point of law which I consider to be settled, it is this, and the celebrated case of Lord Overtoun

against the Free Church of Scotland puts that beyond the possibility of a doubt . . . . .

"The objections which I am going to suggest to you are not based on any technical branch of the law. They are based on legal principles which depend upon fundamental justice, and that was what the Overtoun case laid down in unmistakable terms.

"There were two things held—first of all that no General Assembly, even by a unanimous vote, can destroy the Church that it is commissioned to conserve; and in the second place, that no majority and no Church Court can give the power to divert property from the original purpose for which it has been given to a different purpose.

"I could quote page after page from this case, and it is a case the authority of which has never been questioned.

"Parliament (The British Parliament) did interfere afterwards for this reason only, because a minority who were declared to be the owners of this church property, were such a small minority that they could not carry on the trusts, and some kind of remedy had to be found by Parliament.

"Of course that is not the case you have before you here. You have hundreds of thousands of people who are ready to carry on the Presbyterian Church, to administer the property and carry out these trusts.

"That was a very exceptional case, where the Legislature had to come to the rescue to remedy an impossible situation. But the law as laid down in that case has never been seriously challenged.

"It has been suggested that the legislative power of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, through its Assembly, is more extensive than the legislative power of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland.

"I look in vain for such a distinction, because all the judges there admitted that the General Assembly of the Scottish Churches had powers of legislation . . . as to doctrine . . . as to discipline, just the same as here under the sections of the Blue Book which have here been read.

A Canadian Legal Opinion.

"Section 112 of these Rules and Forms of Procedure of the Presbyterian Church in Canada simply says that the General Assembly has . . . . . the power to deal with matters respecting doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the Church and to preserve the unity of the Church . . . . .

"You cannot construe that as a power given to the Assembly to destroy the Church, to merge it with a different Church. It must preserve, on the contrary, the unity of the Church, and it can legislate as to doctrine, that is, it can explain the fundamental doctrine but it cannot do away with it, and none of the judges in the House of Lords accepted that proposition.

"Some reliance has been placed also on what is known as The Barrier Act. Now it has been sufficiently explained to you that this Barrier Act, so far from conferring upon the Assembly any additional powers of legislation, was simply a check upon hasty legislation . . . . . Never has it been suggested that this Barrier Act, at least since the Overtoun case, would give any power to the Assembly to annihilate the Church.

"That has been amply decided by the Courts in England. It is not a technical question. It is a question of the fundamental principles of justice. And the money which has been contributed by countless benefactors for the propagation of the Presbyterian faith and the maintenance of its formularies is going to be diverted to the maintenance of a Church which has dropped these creeds . . . . .

"That is not a technical matter. It is simply a matter of common honesty. It is a breach of faith and a breach of contract to act otherwise.

"The applicants for this legislation have frankly admitted that they have dropped the Westminster Confession of Faith from their formularies. It has disappeared . . . Not only has it been dropped from the books which contain a statement of their creed but it has been dropped from their hearts also. You have two reverend gentlemen who profess the new faith, who held up the Westminster Confession to

your ridicule and scorn . . . . they have derided it before this audience and this Committee.

"These gentlemen on the Union side who think that a greater, a more efficient and a better Church will result from the dropping of these doctrines which they regard as crude and outworn are entitled to their opinion . . . . .

"If they entertain these views they are quite right in leaving this Church and finding another . . . . . All I am saying is that if they leave this Church and have ceased to believe in its formularies and creeds, in its fundamentals, then they cannot walk out, taking that Church with them, and its name and the property of that Church."

XXI.

REASONS URGED FOR MERGING

HAVING traced some steps of the long continued attempt to drive by civil law the Presbyterians of Canada from their Church, and to abolish by civil law the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the question naturally arises as to what reasons that attempt gave for its acceptance. Its urge upon Presbyterians was chiefly along two lines, ridicule and depreciation of their own Church and alleged reasons why they should desert their Church for a new denomination to be created for them by the Parliament of Canada.

The reasons—so called—were legion. The leader in that legion was named—or misnamed—"duty." Rejecting the Presbyterian Church and accepting the new Church created by Parliament, was urged as a duty supreme, "the Will of God." The prayer of our Lord "that they all may be one"—was stressed "in season and out of season" as declaring the Divine will that all Christians should be in one outward uniform organization, under one central human control, to make and keep it outwardly one. Christ's prayer is too sacred to group with other alleged reasons, many of them trivial and absurd, and is reserved for the next chapter.

A second leader in that legion was utility. It would end overlapping and waste. Year after year, from coast to coast, that echo was continuous.

The action of the United Church of Canada, since its creation by Act of Parliament, in 1925, its intrusion into communities where there was no need nor room for a new denomination, thrusting itself in, splitting and dividing Presbyterian congregations and overlapping in its aggressive sectarianism, on a scale never before witnessed or even dreamed in Canada, is the best proof of the insincerity and untruth of that claim so widely and strongly urged.

If duty and utility were two leading cries, a third appealed to vanity: "The eyes of the world are upon us"—

"The world is looking to Canada for leadership in church union"—"It would be an object lesson to the world," etc.

The best answer to that cry is what the world has seen. It is indeed an object lesson, a lesson of encouragement to all who claim religious liberty, and a lesson of warning to autocracy everywhere that all attempt to coerce the religious life, to crush out religious liberty, to blot out the Presbyterian Church, the Church of the people, and replace it by a clerical and official despotism must ever be in vain. It was sometimes done in the dark ages, but the modern world, with its light and liberty, has no place for it.

Many other cries there were, a few of them as follows:

"The Church should present a united front";—but omitting the fact that the Church is spiritual, her influence spiritual, her impact upon the world spiritual, and that the united front to which Christ calls His Church of every denomination, is not uniformity in shape, form and name, in obedience to one central human control, as with the kingdoms of this world, but a united front of holiness, justice, goodness and truth, united effort to live Christ, preach Christ, follow Christ, to show amid all outward "diversities of operations" the mind and spirit of Christ, and thus present to the world a Christian "united front."

"The Church must free herself from the shackles of traditionalism";—but omitting the fact that there are no shackles of any kind in the Presbyterian Church, no bonds but those of choice and loyalty and love—that only when the rights of the Presbyterian people are taken away and the Church is created a clerical and official autocratic corporation, above and independent of the people, do the shackles begin:—omitting the fact that none but themselves were seeking to impose shackles of any kind, and that their whole effort at church merging by civil power was attempt to impose upon a free people the shackles of clerical and official domination.

"The world and its life and thought are changing and the Church must adapt its teaching and work to that change";—

but omitting the fact that God does not change,—His Word does not change,—that human nature in its needs and longings does not change, that Jesus Christ "the only name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" does not change, but is "the same yesterday, today and forever," and that His condition of saving men from their sins does not change;—omitting also the fact that if any wished change they were free to change but that the "union" movement was an attempt to compel change in others, which is beyond the right of any man.

"We must be abreast of the times";—but omitting the fact that in the race of immortals through time to eternity, Christ and not "the times" must set the pace if that race is to be won.

"It will give us a larger fellowship";—but omitting the fact that true Christian communion is not the superficial fellowship of outward uniformity, not the narrow sectarian fellowship bounded by its own denomination or name, but the larger fellowship of all who see in each other some tokens of fellowship with Christ, and that the Presbyterian Church has always stood for this largest fellowship, than which larger cannot be.

"The things in which we agree are more important than the things in which we differ";—but omitting the fact that this had nothing to do with the question at issue. The question with Presbyterians was whether they would desert a Church definitely pledged to the great truths of the Christian faith, for a Church which had deliberately cut out such pledge, and left its door ajar for the admission of almost any error that might seek entrance. Their question was whether they would surrender the freedom and rights of the people and accept the domination of a clerical autocracy.

"The divisions in the Church are a stumbling-block to the heathen, preventing their acceptance of the Gospel";—but omitting the fact that some of our best missionaries, and longest in service, brand such a statement as "nonsense";—

omitting the fact that there is nothing more familiar to the heathen than divisions and sects in their own religious systems, that Buddhist, Hindoo and Moslem have their sects;—omitting the fact that even if they were not familiar with such divisions, all true missionaries preach the one Christ;—that by the comity of missions the heathen world is divided among the Churches to prevent overlapping;—that the masses of heathenism know little or nothing of denominations in the Church;—that as a rule all that they see or know of the missionaries of different denominations is their helpfulness to each other;—that if they see otherwise the fault is not with the denominations but with the missionaries who thus misrepresent the Church and the spirit of Christ before the heathen;—that if among the heathen, "denominations" is made an objection to Christianity, the origin of that objection is, for the most part, owing to sceptics or to unionist missionaries from the home land;—that all over the awaking Orient the prejudice is not against Christ but against things western, and if that western were to come as one great organization the prejudice would only be intensified.

"A divided Church can never win the world for Christ":—a cheap and easy prophecy which disregards the great fact that all the winning of the world to Christ, thus far accomplished, has been by the different Churches;—that the world is won to Christ not by anything outward, but by the power of the Spirit of God;—that the human agency which wins men to Christ is not the uniformity of great organizations, but the uniformity of professing Christians with the teaching and life of Christ;—that the Church is not divided, but is enlisted in different regiments under Christ their King and Head, and that according to His promise He is with His true soldiers of every regiment, "always, even unto the end of the world."

XXII.

"THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE"

Our Saviour's prayer for His people—"that they all may be one" has no reference to their outward organization but to their spiritual relationship in Him. And yet that prayer was continually quoted as their supreme authority by those who sought by civil law to coerce the Presbyterians of Canada out of their Church into a new denomination, created by Parliament, a degradation of Christ's prayer, beyond words to tell.

Presbyterian people have usually a reverence for Scripture and for the words of Christ. And, thanks to a faithful ministry in generations past, their general attitude towards their ministers is one of respect, affection and trust. When, therefore, such a people were assured by some of those ministers, that in praying for His people "that they all may be one," Christ prayed that they might all be in one outward organization, many were misled. Some facts of that prayer may be noted.

It was in the supreme crisis of His life on earth, with the cross immediately before Him and its shadow already over Him. He was leaving His people. They were a burden on His heart. He prayed earnestly for them, and for all who should believe on Him in all future time. Read carefully and prayerfully the seventeenth chapter of John.

While no man can know the full meaning of that prayer, one thing is clear, that Christ is praying, not for the Church visible, those who profess His name, but for the Church invisible, who in heart are really His, "those whom Thou hast given Me," "All who shall believe in Me."

Another fact is clear, that Christ is here praying not that they may be one outwardly in form but one inwardly in spirit with Him, "As Thou Father are in Me and I in Thee that they also may be one in Us."

To quote Christ therefore as here praying that all who

profess to be His followers may be in one outward uniform organization, is to contradict Christ's own words.

Further, the whole prayer (John 17) is of things spiritual and eternal. "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." "Father I will that they also whom Thou has given Me may be with Me where I am that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me."

To quote Christ as here praying for mere outward uniformity is thrusting an earthly, temporary, human element into this Holy of holies, where Christ's only thought is of the spiritual and eternal. It is a profaning of sacred things.

Yet further, the only record of Christ, during His life on earth, making any reference to the outward organization of His followers, is in Mark 9 : 38, where the Apostle John came to Him saying,—"Master we saw one casting out devils in Thy name and we forbade him, because he followeth not us." And Jesus said,—"Forbid him not." To quote Christ as here praying for the contrary, praying that His people might all be in one outward organization, is to charge Christ with inconsistency, with praying for that which He rebuked John for seeking.

Yet again, Christ never gave any direction, in any way, as to any form or type of outward organization. His one welcome to all is "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," and His one charge is "Follow Me." To quote Christ, therefore, as here praying that all might be in one outward organization, is to charge Him with the absurdity of making the chief burden of His great intercessory prayer for His people, at the supreme crisis in His life on earth, something as to which He never, at any time in His life and ministry, gave the remotest hint or direction.

There have been many attempts in Christian history to coerce all into one outward organization. Seldom has that history been free from such attempts. The means and

methods of coercion have varied, from prison and death in Scotland two and a half centuries ago, to the loss of church homes and possessions in Canada, two and a half years ago. To quote Christ as praying for the success of any such attempt or effort either in Scotland or Canada is blasphemy.

If Christ here prayed that all professing Christians might be in one outward organization, which one?

The testimony of many of the world's leading scholars to the contrary might be quoted. Let two suffice, names known and honored throughout Christendom.

Professor Marcus Dods writes, "This text is often cited by those who seek to promote the union of the churches. But we find it belongs to a very different category, and a much higher region. That all Churches should be under similar government, should adopt the same creed, should use the same forms of worship, is not supremely desirable, but real unity of sentiment towards Christ and of zeal to promote His will is supremely desirable."

"The desirable thing is that they (the Churches) be one in Christ, that they have the same eagerness in His service, that they be as regiments of one army, fighting a common foe, and supporting one another, diverse in outward appearance, in method . . . . . but fighting for the one flag and one cause, and their very diversity more vividly exhibiting their real unity."

Dr. Philip Schaff, the church historian, writes of those who use this prayer of Christ as warrant for outward oneness:—"They blindly indentify spiritual unity with unity of organization."

If Christ here prayed that all His followers might be in one, uniform outward organization, under one central human control, which one?

XXIII.

THE CAMPAIGN OF DERISION

Any account of the attempt to drive Presbyterians from their Church and their Church from Canada would be incomplete without some statement of the ridicule and depreciation which was so large and unworthy a feature of that attempt. Those who believed it their duty to remain in the Presbyterian Church were branded as "narrow," "blind," "bigoted," "behind the times," "living in the past," "tied to old traditions," "placing denomination above Christ," "substituting dry theology, lifeless creed, dead doctrine, for Christian life," etc., etc.,

Where there is wrong in State, Society or Church, it should be pointed out, but abuse or ridicule usually proclaims the absence of reasons, and, in matters affecting the Church, it shows a spirit not of Christ but the opposite.

Mention of that feature of the "union" campaign would gladly be omitted but for the fact that it has not ceased. It marks an all too prevalent type of so called religious activity, and is liable to mislead the young.

As samples of words or terms which figured in that campaign of derision, five may be taken, and grouped as triplets and twins. The twins are "denomination" and "sect"; the triplets, "theology," "creed," "doctrine."

"Denomination" and "sect" as commonly used, represent widely different ideals. Denomination means name, the name given to the different members of the Christian family. James and John bore different names but they were brothers, sons of Zebedee. Each was interested in the other and in the family welfare and work.

In like manner, Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian, are denominations, given names, but Christian is their family name, their surname. Each denomination or name honors the other denominations or names in that Christian family in so far as they themselves and others live worthy of the

family. Each looks upon the others' work and rejoices in the others' success as the work and success of the family for the kingdom of God.

Denominations or names in the Church are no more contrary to the spirit of Christ than are names in a family. They are merely the expression of different personalities in the one family life.

It follows that, as in the family, the sin, if there be sin, is not in the different denominations or names in the Church, but in anything unworthy of the Christian family in any of the names. So long as people think differently in matters of religion, denominations in the Church are essential to religious liberty, that each may be free to hold and to teach, as the teaching of his Church, what he believes the will of God.

To brand denominations in the Church as schism and sin, as a "rending of the body of Christ," and the different denominations as rival camps, fighting each other, is for the most part a slander upon the Church of Christ, save perhaps at times, as in recent years, when a new denomination, created by the Parliament of Canada, has used utmost effort to rend, divide, and blot out the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

"Sect"—with its spirit "sectarian," usually expresses an entirely different meaning, outlook and ideal from denomination. The latter implies unity and brotherhood. The former is exclusive and divisive. The sectarian ideal is not that of being one among brethren in a family, but of being in a special class, with a special right from God and a special claim upon men.

Sect intrudes everywhere. It does not regard the rights of others. It seeks to win from others, to grow at the expense of others, and its vision of Christian brotherhood and fellowship is its own narrow circle. As it can enlarge that circle it has "a larger fellowship." The attempts in recent years to entice or coerce members from the Presbyterian Church into another new denomination have been sectarian to an extent and degree heretofore unknown in Canada.

The Campaign of Derision

"Theology," "creed," "doctrine," the triplets ridiculed in the campaign of derision, are, like all triplets, near of kin. Theology is knowledge of God. Creed is belief in, acceptance of, that knowledge. Doctrine is that knowledge as taught to others. A royal trinity of words! And yet few words in the course of the twenty years conflict have been more constantly ridiculed by those who sought to destroy the Presbyterian Church. That Church was laughed to scorn as representing an "antiquated theology," "outworn creeds," "dead doctrines," as "preaching theology, creed, doctrine, in place of Christ." These and other derisive terms have had continuous iteration from those who had publicly declared their acceptance of that theology, creed, doctrine, and had vowed "to maintain and defend the same."

"Theology" is from two old Greek words, "theos" God, and "logos" a word, or knowledge, or science. Theology is the science or knowledge of God, the knowledge that men may have of God from His works and expecially from His word.

"God is great," that is theology. "God is sovereign," that is theology. "God is love," that is theology. "God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." That is theology.

To treat theology with contempt is thus to treat the knowledge of our Heavenly Father and his wonderful redemption for man. Strange that men should pride themselves upon their knowledge of Geology, Physiology, Biology and all other ologies and put contempt on Theology, the only knowledge which has to do with man's supreme concern, his relation to God. Such ridicule does not hurt theology but it stamps those who ridicule.

"Creed" is from an old Latin word "credo," I believe. What one believes about any subject is his creed, his belief about that subject. One who believes in an unseen spiritual power has a religious creed. One who believes that power

to be a personal God has a more definite creed. One who believes the Bible to be a revelation from God and believes its teaching about God, Christ, sin, salvation, has a grand and glorious creed. A creedless Christian is a contradiction in terms. The name Christian implies a creed, believing something about Christ. One who claims to have no religious creed proclaims himself an agnostic. To depreciate creed is to magnify ignorance.

"Doctrine" is from an old Latin word "docere," to teach. It is the completion of this grand trinity of words. Theology is knowledge of God. Creed is belief in, acceptance of that knowledge. Doctrine is the imparting of that knowledge to others. If theology, knowledge about God, is good,—creed, belief in, acceptance of that knowledge, is better,—and doctrine, teaching that knowledge to others, is best, because it means others also sharing that good.

Hear Moses!—"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, as dew upon the tender herb, as showers upon the grass." Hear Solomon!—"I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law." Hear what is written of Christ!—"The people were astonished at His Doctrine." Hear what is said of the early Christians!—They "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine." Hear the beloved John!—"If any come unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not, nor bid him God speed." Hear Paul!—"All Scripture is . . . . . profitable . . . . . for doctrine";—"Till I come give attendance to doctrine"; and his earnest plea—"I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them."

XXIV.

MOTIVES FOR URGING

THE motives of those who urged the people to desert their Church for a new denomination, to be created by Act of Parliament, are best known to themselves and to Him who knoweth all things.

Judged by their words some of them wished to get rid of the Presbyterian pledge to the great evangelical truths of the Christian faith. As already stated, a voice seldom silent through the twenty years' conflict was that of depreciation and ridicule of the Presbyterian Church. Men who in their ordination vows had declared their belief in the great doctrines of Scripture as held by that Church, and had pledged themselves "to maintain and defend the same," and on the strength of that declaration and pledge had been admitted to the ministry of that Church as teachers of her doctrines or religious beliefs, instead of honestly withdrawing from their positions as teachers in that Church, used their positions to hold up those doctrines to scorn as "behind the times," "out of date," "antiquated," "outworn" and kindred terms of depreciation and contempt.

Others were doubtless influenced by two oft heard cries that the new Church "would provide a minister for every congregation, and a congregation for every effective minister," and that the Settlement Committee would afford a ready means of securing a change of pastorate without having to await the Lord's leading through the choice and call of His people.

Those ministers lost sight of the Presbyterian ideal that the people, including ministers, are the Church; that it is the right of the people to choose their own ministers, that Christ is only King and Head of the Church, and that if His ministers give themselves wholly and loyally to His service, He will guide them by His Spirit, through the call of His people, where He would have them serve, and that the

true ideal for the Christian minister is to serve, with God's help, as best he can, where the Head of the Church has led him, and when that Head wishes him elsewhere in His Church He will open the way;—that "The Lord is my Shepherd, He leadeth me" is as true of ministers in their work, as in the Shepherd Psalm. Some evidently preferred trusting to the Settlement Committee.

Others were no doubt influenced by the continuous assurance that there would be no Presbyterian Church, that their only opportunity for work in the ministry was to go into the new Church, and, without decided convictions in the matter, they accepted what seemed to them the inevitable.

Others in aid-receiving congregations had good reason to fear that the aid would be imperilled if, in this matter, they ventured to oppose official will. Yet others were on home mission fields, where their positions depended, not upon the call of the people but upon appointment by a committee or secretary, and they accepted the situation.

Some doubtless honestly believed it a good thing, but their approval of its immoral methods, is hard to understand.

Some were possibly attracted by the greatness of the scheme. One of their leaders was reported to have given as his motive, "It is going to be a big thing and I cannot afford not to be in it."

There are possibly some regrets today among those who misused their positions of trust for the betrayal and extinction of their Church. They sold their birthright for a mess of pottage. The mess came but the pottage was not there.

XXV.

REASONS AGAINST MERGING

One reason why Presbyterians who wished to be loyal to truth could have nothing to do with the proposed "union" was that even if they desired such a change, they knew the only honest way was first to withdraw from their present Church and then go where they might wish. They knew that the Presbyterian Church is a voluntary fellowship, banded together upon certain conditions, that upon those conditions they had pledged their faith to that Church so long as they were in it, that they had no legal or moral right to violate these conditions.

Beyond that general objection the reasons why Presbyterians would not forsake their Church at the bidding of assumed clerical and official authority were many and varied. With some it was simply that they loved their Church and saw no reason why they should cast it aside.

That Church was linked with all that was most precious in their lives. In that Church their parents had dedicated them to God in baptism, and there they had worshipped with those parents through childhood's happy years. In that Church they had made public profession of their faith. In that Church they had enjoyed their communion seasons and had covenanted with God in baptism to train their children for Him. With the comforting services of that Church they had laid their dear ones to rest in the blessed hope of a meeting again to part no more. All that was sweetest in memory and brightest in hope was linked with that Church and they saw no sufficient reason for surrendering it to those who sought its banishment from Canada.

Others, taking Christ's own test, judged their Church by its fruits. They knew the broad-minded brotherhood of the Presbyterian Church towards other denominations of the great Christian family, while at the same time holding

fast her own Scriptural doctrine and polity. They knew the stand and struggle of their Church in the past for truth and for religious liberty and how great a factor the Presbyterian Church has been in securing the civil and religious liberty the world today enjoys. They knew her missionary history, faithful beyond most to the great commission of giving the Gospel to the world, and they would not forsake a Church which had borne such fruits until they found a better.

Yet others studied the beliefs and teachings of their Church which led her to bring forth those fruits. They found their Church holding fast the great truth of the supreme Sovereignty of a God of Infinite love. They could not understand how God can be supremely Sovereign, ruling all things according to His own will, and yet man be free. But they knew that if God be Infinite He must be Sovereign, and they knew that they were free. They left to His Infinite Mind that which their finite minds could not grasp; they rejoiced that the world is under such Sovereign love and care, and they prized the more the Church which magnifies that truth.

Some studied their Church yet further, and found that Church pledged to the Word of God as the supreme Standard of faith and life, and to the great truths of that Word as set forth in the Subordinate Standards of their Church, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, and they would not forsake a Church thus pledged to the truths that circle around the Cross, for a Church not pledged to any definite Christian truth.

In yet further study they learned how their Church exalts and honors man, allowing no human agency to come between the people and their God, bringing every man, through Christ, into God's immediate presence, holding every man equal in the sight of God and in the Church of God, no man having the right to dictate the faith of another, and all pledged, while in the Church, to maintain the truths upon which that Church is builded.

Reasons Against Merging

Some Presbyterians studied the question yet further. They examined the Church which sought to displace their own, and found it wanting. They found what they believed to be a lower ideal of the Church, that instead of being a Church of Christ, with Christ its only King and Head, it was also a civil corporation, a creation of Parliament, a creature of the State, having its existence and name by grace of Parliament, its teachings authorized by Parliament, its life dependent upon the will of Parliament. And they would not dishonor their ideal of the Church of Christ by accepting as a Church a creation of the State, or by acknowledging the authority of Parliament to sanction and authorize the truths which the Church might believe and teach.

Presbyterians further found that the new Corporation dishonored God by taking from Him His supreme place as the only Lord of the conscience, and intruded a class of men between the people and God, with power to decide the professed faith of the people, power to "alter" their statement of their faith, power to "change" it, power to "unite" the Church, the people, "with any other Church or religious denomination" no matter what its faith, while the people were transferred to that other, without option or voice in the transfer, no matter what they believed God would have them do.

Presbyterians further found that this new church corporation, created by Act of Parliament, dishonored the people by giving them an inferior place in the Church, that while in their own Presbyterian Church, the people are the Church, and everything in the Church depends, under God, upon the will of the people, that in the new denomination seeking to displace their own, the clergy and officials are the Church, that all depends upon the will of those clergy and officials, while the rights of the people are no more, that the people, by act of Parliament, are at the disposal of ecclesiastical masters, that their professed beliefs may be changed at any time to anything those masters may choose,

and they would not accept a Church which thus degraded the people into an unthinking serfdom.

Presbyterians further found that this new denomination had no pledge to the great truths of God's word. They knew that their own Church has its statement of these truths, a statement summed up in the Confession of Faith and more briefly in the Shorter Catechism, that crowning work of over five years of labor by the Westminster Assembly of divines, and to these truths their Church stands pledged. But they found that the new Church which sought to displace their own, while it had a statement of doctrine, requires no one to declare acceptance of that statement.

They found that in the first draft of ordination vows for ministers, submitted to the Presbyterian Assembly in 1906, there was such a vow, as follows:—"Do you believe the Statement of Doctrine of the United Church, as you understand it, to be agreeable to the teaching of Holy Scripture, and is your own personal faith in essential agreement therewith."

Even that vow was quite vague in that it left the individual to decide how much "agreement" was "essential." But loose and vague as it was it did not satisfy some of the builders of the new Church who objected to declaring acceptance of any religious beliefs, and that vow was cut out, leaving that new Church an open door to all kinds of error. And Presbyterians would not forsake their own historic Church, pledged to truth and freedom, with its glorious history, for a new civil corporation having no declared acceptance of any definite Christian truth.

The more fully Presbyterians studied their own Church the more they saw in that Church to love and prize; and the more they studied the new denomination which was attempting to displace it, the more they found which they could not approve or accept, and the stronger their purpose, having "proved all things," to "hold fast that which is good."

XXVI.

WHERE—THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH?

Of the many fictions attendant upon the main fiction of "Church Union" one of the most fictitious is that the Presbyterian Church in Canada, which on June 10, 1925, emerged triumphant from her twenty years' conflict for liberty and life, and with her communicant membership of nearly one hundred and eighty thousand, in about thirteen hundred congregations, grouped in forty-three presbyteries and eight synods, all over Canada, from ocean to ocean, is pressing forward with a purpose and prospect never before excelled in all her history, is, by Act of Parliament, a shadowy, ghostlike existence, invisible, intangible, but "without loss of identity," somewhere, somehow, in the new corporation created by Parliament, "The United Church of Canada."

While the fiction is entirely absurd, that absurdity may be illustrated by some facts.

A first fact is that the Presbyterian Church in Canada has not a corporate existence which Parliament can touch or transfer. It is not a legal entity. It cannot sue or be sued by action at law. It is not a corporation, as is the United Church of Canada, created by Act of Parliament, taking its being by grace of Parliament, living at the will of Parliament and which Parliament can change, merge or disband at will.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is simply the voluntary fellowship of those who stand pledged to Presbyterian principles,—to the truths of the Word of God as these truths are summed up in the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, and to Presbyterian Polity as based upon Scripture and upon the rights of the people.

Those in Canada who are banded together in declared acceptance of that system of doctrine and polity are the Presbyterian Church in Canada. So long as they remain in that fellowship, pledged to those principles, no power,

ecclesiastical or civil, can make them other than they are, The Presbyterian Church in Canada. If they withdraw from that fellowship and join with another Church which does not maintain those principles, they are no longer Presbyterian.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a fellowship of religious belief. No civil government gave its name and no civil government can take away that name. It is entitled to civil protection in its civil rights, but it asks liberty of no civil government to live, and not at the bidding of any civil government will it die.

A second fact in this connection is that Parliament did not profess to place the Presbyterian Church within the United Church. The Act is self contradictory, but it distinctly provided that congregations and individuals might enter the United Church or remain out of it as they should choose. It provided that every Presbyterian congregation in Canada might, if it so desired, remain out of the United Church.

If, therefore, Parliament provided for all and everything Presbyterian remaining out of the United Church, how can it be said to have legislated the Presbyterian Church into the United Church of Canada? (See also chapter XVII).

A third fact is that even if Parliament had enacted such a law, it would be ultra vires, beyond its power. The British North America Act, which is the Constitution of Canada, guarantees religious liberty. Any attempt of Parliament to drive Presbyterians out of their Church, or to take from Presbyterians their Church, would be a taking away of their religious liberty, and therefore a violation of the British North America Act, which is Canada's Constitution, and would be simply so much waste paper.

Well did Parliament add as a final clause to the United Church of Canada Act—"It is intended to sanction the provisions contained therein, in so far, and in so far only, as it is competent to the Parliament so to do,"

A fourth fact is that the Canadian Government ever

since the withdrawal of some from the Presbyterian Church in June, 1925, has recognized the Presbyterian Church in Canada to be existing by itself as before and unchanged. Note one example.

The Government over fifty years ago registered "The Presbyterian Record"—"the Official Organ of the Presbyterian Church in Canada," as entitled to periodical mailing privileges. Every month without halt, change or notice of change, it has sent its account for postage, as in years past, to "The Presbyterian Record."

If that Presbyterian Record were the official organ of a new Presbyterian Church, it would be a new periodical, and would require to have new mailing privileges. It could not be otherwise. But the Government acknowledges and declares it the same official organ as formerly, which it can only be, as the Official Organ of the same Church.

In these latter days physicians prescribe reducing for health. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is the same Church as in the past, but "reduced." That Church had accumulated much that was not Presbyterian, in membership, ministry, doctrine and polity. But through recent strenuous exercise of her rights as a Church of free people she has "reduced" and is more fit and free than for many a bygone year.

Sandy McDonald was in the world war. He was reported killed. Some claimed his heritage. Sandy came home. The proof that the report was false and their claim groundless, was Sandy himsel'.

If you ask "Where the Presbyterian Church," look around you.

XXVII.

WHENCE THE UNITED CHURCH?

THROUGH the twenty years of planning and promoting the "United Church of Canada," assurance was continuous that the proposed new denomination would be builded by taking all that was best in each of the three Churches sought to be merged, and casting aside what was useless, antiquated, out of date in any of the three, and that thus, in utility and beauty, the new Church would be modern, up to date, far in advance of any heretofore.

Now that the selection of what those builders deemed best has been made, the result may be stated in a sentence. The doctrinal position of the new Church, its attitude to the great truths of the Christian faith, has been taken from the Congregationalists; its polity has been taken from the Methodist Church; and four empty names,—"elder," "session," "presbytery," "call," all of them stripped of their meaning, rights and powers, from the Presbyterian Church.

That the Congregationalists decided the doctrine of the United Church, its attitude to religious belief and teaching, is a simple fact in the history of the merger movement. The Basis of Union contains a "Statement of Doctrine" which was prepared and published at an early date in the planning of the United Church, an architect's plan, to show how goodly the new denomination would be.

That Statement of Doctrine had then a real meaning, for in the first published draft of the three ordination vows for ministers (see Assembly Minutes, 1906, page 338) is the following vow to be taken by all ministers of the proposed new Church at ordination;—"Do you believe the Statement of Doctrine of the United Church, as you understand it, to be agreeable to the teaching of Scripture, and is your own personal faith in essential agreement therewith and

as a minister in this Church do you pledge adherence thereto?"

That vow would appear to be sufficiently vague to satisfy almost anyone, for it permitted the candidate to decide for himself as to what is "essential agreement."

But even in that vague form it was not acceptable to the Congregationalists, who opposed "subscription to a creed." (See Assembly Minutes, 1908, page 327).

When the ordination vows for ministers in the United Church were next published, the first of the three vows had been divided into two, so that as formerly three vows remained, but the vow of acceptance of that statement of doctrine had disappeared, and the United Church has today, in the ordination vows of its ministers, no declared acceptance of any statement of religious belief, not even of the "statement of doctrine" in its own "basis of union." That statement of doctrine is therefore worse than useless. It is dishonest; a pretence without reality, for no one is asked to subscribe to it.

While the omission of any declared statement of religious belief was due to Congregationalists, many from the other Churches must have had more or less of sympathy with such a step, or they would not have yielded so momentous an issue and accepted a Church with an open door to almost any error that men may choose to teach.

That the polity of the United Church was taken from the Methodist Church is another fact equally patent.

The United Church is a civil corporation as was the Methodist Church, but with special corporate powers. For example, it can create other corporations within itself. It can incorporate its own boards, committees, congregations, colleges, or aught else, a function of civil government, so far as we are aware, never before given in Canada to any corporation, ecclesiastical or civil.

In all that has to do with the ministry and their place

and power in the Church, the polity of the Methodist Church has been adopted, and in some cases accentuated.

In the Presbyterian Church men are not ordained to the ministry until they receive a call from the people, and when they are ordained they cannot be inducted as ministers of a self-supporting congregation unless called by the people.

In the United Church, as in the former Methodist Church, they are ordained to the ministry by a Committee of Conference without any reference to the people. And after ordination they may be appointed to congregations by the Settlement Committee, as formerly by the Stationing Committee in the Methodist Church, with or without the consent of the people.

It is true that in the United Church the congregation "may extend a call or invitation";—"but the right of appointment shall rest with the Settlement Committee." This Committee has absolute power in the matter, for it "shall report to Conference for information only."

The Settlement Committee has still further power. The Act of Parliament is as follows:—"The Settlement Committee shall have power to initiate correspondence" . . . . . with a view to "desirable settlements"—which means that it can intrude at any time between a congregation and its minister and remove him to another charge.

If some members of that Settlement Committee wish for themselves a change of pastorate, "they have power to initiate correspondence" with a view to change, and to remove other ministers to less desirable charges to make place for themselves. To say that men would not do such a thing is begging the question. Neither Church nor State enacts laws which are not intended to be used, and when laws of Church or State give men power, and self interest is concerned, it is easy to find excuse for using that power.

The contribution of the Presbyterian Church to the building of the United Church was, as already stated, four empty names, "elder," "session," "presbytery" "call," but of these in another chapter.

XXVIII.

THE FOUR EMPTY NAMES

As stated in the previous chapter, the builders of the United Church of Canada took its doctrine, its attitude as to religious belief and teaching, from the Congregationalists, its polity or church government from the Methodist Church, and from the Presbyterian Church not a single distinctive Presbyterian principle, either in doctrine or polity, nothing but four empty names, "elder," "session," "presbytery," "call," each name stripped of the meaning, power and rights which belong to it in the Presbyterian Church.

Most Churches have several grades of church courts or bodies of spiritual oversight and care, one for the local congregation, one for the whole Church, with one or two other intermediate courts for convenience of meeting and work. A brief statement of the courts of the two Churches where the above four names are used may be helpful in showing how these names are in the Presbyterian Church a reality, in the United Church only a name.

The Presbyterian Church has four church courts, Session, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. The Session is the court of the congregation, and consists of the minister, called by the congregation, and the elders elected by the congregation.

The Presbytery consists of the minister and an elder from each of several adjoining congregations, and has a combined care and oversight of them all. The elder sent to presbytery is chosen by his fellow elders in the Session, to be "presbytery elder" for the year.

The Synod consists of several presbyteries. Each member of presbytery is a member of synod, which is thus simply a larger presbytery, a larger number of congregations, as represented by their minister and an elder, banding together for the care of the whole.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has forty-three

Presbyteries, each with an average of about thirty congregations. Some of these Presbyteries meet twice a year, some quarterly, or oftener, as may be necessary.

These forty-three presbyteries are grouped in eight Synods, one in the Maritimes, three in Quebec and Ontario, and four west of the Lakes, each synod meeting usually once a year.

The General Assembly represents the whole Church. An Assembly composed, as is presbytery and synod, of the minister and an elder from each congregation would be too large a gathering for convenience, hence the presbyteries choose some of their number, at present one in five of their ministers and an equal number of elders, as "commissioners" to constitute the Assembly.

All three higher church courts, Presbytery, Synod and Assembly, are thus composed of ministers and elders in equal numbers and with equal rights and powers. The one apparent inequality is that the moderator in these courts, chosen by the members of the court from their own number, is always a minister. But that office is merely one of courtesy, having no power, and it is judged more fitting that the moderator, nominally representing the Church, should be a minister whose whole life is devoted to the work of the Church, rather than an elder, however worthy, who might be honorably prominent in political or commercial life, and some of whose zealous supporters or jealous opponents might involve the Church in political or class strife.

But while the moderator is always a minister, yet in their rights and powers in Presbytery, Synod and Assembly, ministers and elders are in complete equality, and all are first chosen to office by the people.

The United Church has three courts, which it names "Presbytery," "Conference" and "General Council." The first is borrowed from the Presbyterian Church, the second from the Methodist Church, the third from the Congregationalists.

The Four Empty Names

The "Session" in the United Church consists of the minister and the "elders" of the congregation. It is not a court of the Church as a whole for none of the higher courts of the Church are in any way dependent upon it or linked with it.

The "Presbytery" in the United Church consists of the minister and a "non-ministerial representative" from each congregation, elected, not by the Session as in the Presbyterian Church, but by the Official Board, and that representative may be anyone in the congregation, an elder or any other member of the Church, but does not require to be first chosen to office by the people.

The "Conference" in the United Church consists of the ministers in each presbytery and an equal number of non-ministerial representatives, chosen by presbytery, of whom a majority are from those previously chosen by the official boards, not by the people, and the remainder any members of the Church whom the presbytery may select and who do not require to be "elders" or any other chosen to office by the people.

The "General Council" of the United Church is chosen by the Conferences, the next lower courts, and consists of ministers and "non-ministerial representatives" in equal number. The latter are any whom the Conferences may choose, and they do not require even to be members of the Church.

Thus while the three superior courts of the Presbyterian Church are composed of an equal number of ministers and elders, all of whom must first have been chosen to office by the people, the corresponding courts of the United Church consist of an equal number of ministers and "non-ministerial representatives," not one of whom need have been first chosen to office by the people. The people are thus entirely cut off from any voice in the constitution of the courts of the United Church, which have full control of its affairs, and can "alter" or "change" that Church or "unite with any other Church or religious denomination."

The Four Empty Names

Turning now to the four names which the United Church has borrowed from the Presbyterian Church and stripped of their meaning, the first in order is the "elder."

When an elder is elected in the Presbyterian Church, he has, as an elder, a permanent share and right in the care of the Church as a whole, a right to one half the membership in all the higher Courts of the Church, the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. One half of all these courts must be elders, first chosen to office by the people.

The Church accordingly provides for the ordination of the elder, for life or good conduct, just as it provides for the ordination of the minister, and with the same ordination vows of adherence to Presbyterian doctrine or religious belief, and of polity or church government. It requires of the elder in his ordination the same pledge "to maintain and defend" that doctrine and polity as it does of the minister, because he is entrusted in all the Courts of the Church with the care of the whole Church, as is the minister.

When one is elected an "elder" in the United Church, he is simply chosen for the time to a committee of the congregation, with no rights of any kind beyond the congregation. Elders may or may not be chosen as "non-ministerial representatives" in the courts of the Church. The office of the eldership in that Church gives them no right to be thus chosen. They may be good men, but to use the word "elder" of the office bestowed upon them, in the sense in which that word obtains in the Presbyterian Church, is an entire misuse of words.

The United Church, therefore, has no ordination vows of any kind for the elder. The constitution of that Church merely states in a casual way that "he may be ordained or set apart"—but does not acknowledge his ordination by making any provision for it in the way of ordination vows, does not acknowledge him as having any part in the management of the Church as a whole.

The United Church has ordination vows for the minister, though not pledging him to any definite Christian truth,

but it has none for the elder. He is not in the same church class with the minister. In the government of the Presbyterian Church, in all its church courts, the elder is in every respect the equal of the minister. In the United Church the elder is simply a member of a committee in the congregation, with no rights beyond the congregation, no rights in any of the courts of the church. "Elder" in that Church is but an empty name.

Next in order of the empty names is the "Session." In the Presbyterian Church the Session has an important place in the polity of the Church as a whole. It is a court of the Church as a whole. It is the structural foundation upon which rests the whole Presbyterian polity or church government. The Session, the body of elders in a congregation, chooses one of its number, who shall, with the minister, be a part of the Presbytery and Synod, while the Presbytery, thus composed of ministers and of elders chosen by the Sessions, selects the ministers and elders who shall, as Commissioners, constitute the General Assembly.

In the Presbyterian Church, the Session, the choice, the voice of the people, is the human foundation of the whole structure. Session, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, are the first, second, third, fourth storeys. But all three upper storeys rest upon the first, upon the Session, just as completely as do the upper storeys of a house upon the first storey, for they must be builded upon the Session.

In the United Church the "Session" is chosen by the congregation to look after its local spiritual affairs. The "committee of stewards" who may or may not be in full membership in the Church, is chosen to secure contributions for local self support. The "official board," consisting of the "session," the "committee of stewards," and representatives of other departments of church work, some of whom may not be members of the Church, looks after the missionary budget, and among other duties selects the "non-ministerial representatives" to presbytery, who may or may not be elders.

The Session, therefore, which in the Presbyterian Church is the foundation of the whole structure of polity or government, a court of the Church as a whole, and the foundation on which rests all the higher courts, is in the United Church simply the name of a committee of the congregation with no rights or powers beyond. Neither elders nor sessions have any place or right of representation in the higher courts of the Church. They are only empty names.

The third empty name is "Presbytery." In the Presbyterian Church the presbytery is composed of the ministers on the Roll of Presbytery and an equal number of elders. The United Church "presbytery" consists of the ministers with "the elders, deacons, leaders, or other non-ministerial representatives."

In the Presbyterian Church the Presbytery has everything to do with the ordination of men to the ministry, after the people have given their sanction by a call. In the United Church the presbytery has nothing to do with the ordination of men to the ministry. They are ordained by "Conference," as in the Methodist Church. The only right of presbytery is to recommend, just as the only right of the people is to ask or beg.

In the Presbyterian Church the Presbytery, consisting of the ministers and elders of the neighboring congregations, has, subject to the will and call of the people, everything to do with the settlement of ministers. In the United Church everything of this kind is taken from the "presbytery" and is in the hands of the "Settlement Committee," independent of the people's will. The presbytery is simply a servant to do the bidding of the "Settlement Committee."

In the Presbyterian Church the Presbytery chooses and appoints the General Assembly, the highest court of the Church, and can choose and appoint only ministers and elders first chosen to office by the people. In the United Church this right is taken from "presbytery" and vested in the Conference, which can appoint ministers and "non-

ministerial representatives" who were never first chosen or elected by the people. Presbytery in the United Church has nothing of the meaning and rights of presbytery in the Presbyterian Church. It is but an empty name.

The fourth empty name is the "Call." In the Presbyterian Church "all members in full communion, male and female, have the right to vote at all congregational meetings, and to them exclusively belongs the right of choosing ministers." (Rules, Section 14).

In the United Church:—"Any pastoral charge, in view of a vacancy, may extend a call or invitation to any properly qualified minister or ministers, but the right of appointment shall rest with the Settlement Committee, which shall report to the Conference for information only." (U.C.C. Manual 110.)

In the Presbyterian Church the Call is the right of the people. No power in that Church can intrude upon a self-supporting congregation a minister whom they have not called and do not want. The people of a congregation keep the door through which must enter the minister to that congregation.

Further, the Call in the Presbyterian Church is the door through which men enter the ministry of the Church as a whole. No man is ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian Church, unless perhaps for some special work, as a missionary, until he receives a Call from a congregation. The people through their Call thus keep and control the door through which must enter those who shall minister in the Church, just as they keep the door through which the minister, after his ordination, enters any congregation of the Church. The Presbyterian ideal is that the people are the Church, and that the spirit of God guiding His people leads the Church in the choice of those who shall serve the Church in the ministry.

In the United Church this right of the people as keepers of both these doors is taken away. Their Call has nothing

to do with men entering the ministry. Ministers are ordained by Conference without any reference to a Call by the people.

And the people have no voice in keeping the gate through which a minister enters their own congregation. They "may extend a call or invitation," they are given the right to beg, "but the right of appointment shall rest with the Settlement Committee." The Call is thus, if possible, more completely empty than any other of the four empty names.

These four names, stripped of their meaning, rights and powers, are all the material that the builders of the United Church of Canada took from the Presbyterian Church for their new denomination. Evangelical democracy does not furnish much suitable building material for an autocratic, clerical and official corporation.

Presbyterians have cause for thankfulness that the four realities, Elder, Session, Presbytery, Call, in all the fulness of their meaning and of the rights of the people, are yet with the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

XXIX.

"THE DIFFERENCE"

"You'll never know the difference" was a constant opiate to Presbyterians, to quiet them during the attempted extinction of their Church. Some points of difference between the Presbyterian Church and the Church which sought to displace it and drive it from Canada, have been given in previous chapters, but are here grouped in brief for convenience.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a democracy, the people are the Church. All control in that Church begins and ends with the people. The United Church of Canada is an autocracy. The clergy and officials are the Church. With them all control in that Church begins and ends.

In the Presbyterian Church the people keep, guard and control the door through which must enter the ministry of the Church. No man is ordained to that ministry except for special work, such as a foreign missionary, until he receives a Call from the people. The ideal is that the people are the Church; that God by His Spirit will guide His people, the Church, if they look to Him; that, being the Church, the keeping of this door is their right. In the United Church, as in the former Methodist Church, men are ordained to the ministry by the clergy and officials without any reference to the people. The people have no voice in any way in the keeping of that door.

In the Presbyterian Church the people of a congregation control the door through which enters the minister to that congregation—"to them exclusively belongs the right of choosing ministers." (Rules, Section 14). In the United Church the people "may extend a call or invitation" . . . . "but the right of appointment shall rest with the Settlement Committee." (U.C.C. Manual 110).

In the Presbyterian Church no power can intrude into a self-supporting congregation a minister whom the people

have not called and do not want. In the United Church Act the Settlement Committee may appoint any minister to any congregation, with or without the consent of the people.

The Presbyterian Church is a voluntary fellowship of those who are pledged to the same great truths of the Christian faith, and it owns no earthly authority in matters spiritual, save in obedience to those great truths. The United Church is a civil corporation, created by Act of Parliament, under the control of its clergy and officials, independent of the people;—its religious belief and teaching sanctioned by parliament, a power which the Presbyterian Church does not acknowledge in matters of faith and worship.

In the Presbyterian Church the one stabilized centre around which all else revolves, and upon which all else rests, is the truth of the Word of God, and the Presbyterterian understanding of that truth as it is set forth in the Westminster Confession, and in the summary of that Confession, the Shorter Catechism.

In the United Church the one stabilized changeless centre, around which all else revolves and upon which all else depends, is the absolute power of the clergy and officials in the church courts, "power to alter, change" . . . . . "to unite with any other church or religious denomination" upon any terms they may choose, power unlimited to do with the church what they will. That absolute power of the clergy and officials is the one thing permanent and abiding in the United Church Act. It is a despotism complete.

In the Presbyterian Church the people have the security of knowing that their Church is—and will continue to be—based upon the changeless truth of the Word of God, because all who care for it, ministers and elders, are pledged to it, "to maintain and defend the same." In the United Church the people do not know what their Church may be on the morrow, for its controllers, its clergy and officials, have power to do with it what they will.

"The Difference"

In the Presbyterian Church nothing can take away the rights of the people who are the Church. In the United Church the people are chattels, like the pews, footstools and collection plates, to be transferred at the will of their masters to some other type of Church, or to some new Church, whenever and however and to whatever these masters over the Church may choose. (Act, 28, b, c.)

In the Presbyterian Church the Session has control of the pulpit and of its supply, and of the admission of any other minister to it in the absence of their own minister. In the United Church the minister can invite any minister of any religious denomination, with or without the consent of the session. (Act, Schedule B. 4 a).

In the Presbyterian Church the manse is controlled by the congregation, and if not suitably situated for the minister and he lives in another house, they can let it as they may choose. In the United Church, under like conditions, they can let it—"with the consent in writing of said minister." (Act, Schedule B, 5.)

In the Presbyterian Church ministers are "ministers," chosen to minister or serve in the Church, "to maintain and defend" it as it is. In the United Church the clergy and officials are masters over the Church, with power to "alter," "change" it, as they may choose. (Act, 28, b, c.)

The Presbyterian Church is pledged to the great truths of the Word of God as understood by that Church and set forth in the "Subordinate Standards of that Church," the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. The United Church is pledged to no definite Christian truth, not even to the "Statement of Doctrine" in its United Church Act.

In the Presbyterian Church the ruling elder, chosen by the people, has a right to one half of the membership in all the higher courts of the Church, in Presbytery, Synod and Assembly. In the United Church the "elder" has no rights beyond his own congregation. All the courts of that Church may be constituted without a single elder, or any other chosen by the people.

"The Difference"

In the Presbyterian Church the Session, chosen by the people, the court of the congregation, is one of the four courts of the Church, Session, Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly. All the other courts are dependent upon it. In the United Church the Session is a committee of the congregation. It is not linked with any courts of the Church. It is not a court of the Church as a whole.

In the four Courts of the Presbyterian Church, Session, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly—every member thereof, ministers and elders, must first have been chosen to office by the people. In the three Courts of the United Church—"Presbytery," Conference and General Council—not a single member thereof need be of those first chosen to office by the people.

The Presbyterian Church stands pledged to great definite truths of Scripture as set forth and explained in the Subordinate Standards of that Church, and if a minister teaches otherwise he is breaking his ordination vows. The United Church stands pledged to no definite truths and if a minister preaches other than evangelical truth he can claim that it is the word of God as he understands that word.

In the Presbyterian Church there is religious liberty in fullest measure. Any man who accepts its conditions and whose life is right can join it. If he changes his mind he can withdraw from it. But no other can change its conditions and thus compel him to change or get out from it. In the United Church the people have no such security. It may be changed to something different, at any time, at the will of its masters, if and when they choose to change it, and though the people may not like the change they have to accept that change or withdraw.

The Presbyterian Church requires a people who think and judge for themselves. The people are "the Church." The United Church requires a people who will obey. The clergy and officials, independently of the people, are "the Church." The Presbyterian Church is a democracy; the

United Church an autocracy. The former is the spirit of the twentieth century, the latter of the seventeenth.

Two striking testimonies as to "the difference" have recently been given.

One of these if from the head centre of the World's Methodism. The United Church of Canada has been accepted for membership in the World's Methodist Ecumenical Council as in all respects a Methodist Church. Those who know anything of the subject know "the difference" between Methodism and Presbyterianism, the former an autocracy, the latter a democracy. If the United Church of Canada is Presbyterian, it cannot be Methodist. If Methodist it cannot be Presbyterian.

The other striking testimony as to "the difference" is from the United Church itself.

An Italian Presbyterian congregation in Montreal had been persuaded not to vote on "church union," as there was "no difference." They were thus placed nominally in the United Church. Realizing their mistake they asked, unanimously, to be taken back as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and, with their minister, were duly received into that Church.

The United Church, a great corporation, rich and strong, building new churches all over Canada, in Presbyterian communities where they are not needed, has taken legal action against this little Italian congregation, to take from them their church home, and the legal papers in that action, dated March 12, 1928, describe The Presbyterian Church in Canada, as—

"A religious body, separate and distinct from the United Church of Canada, and which holds and preaches doctrines and beliefs at variance with those of the said United Church, as its proponents declare."

XXX.

PROFIT AND LOSS

Profit and loss in things material may be measured by men, but where spiritual interests are concerned, such measurement is beyond them,—"for what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" One who seeks or gains an end by unworthy means, gives for that temporary end something of his higher, better self, something of his soul, and is poorer forever in what is best, to an extent that only God can know.

The attempted merging of the Presbyterian Church involved both the temporal and spiritual, and the profit and loss of that attempt can be judged only by Him who knows spiritual values, the value of the soul.

But of that attempt there have been many estimates, ranging all the way from "the will of God" to an "iniquity," a "crime," while estimates of its results, even among its promoters, have ranged from a "sublime achievement of faith" to "a failure," "a mistake," "a fiasco," "a tragedy."

Any estimate of the results of the profit and loss of that attempt would naturally cover three fields, the Churches concerned, the members of those Churches, and the Kingdom of God in the world.

As to the Kingdom of God, the Church as a whole, there is one loss little realized, the thousands unchurched, attending no church. Their church homes were wrongfully taken from them, They will not worship where they were wronged. "Church Union" has cut them adrift.

As for individuals, many Presbyterians suffered material loss, their church homes which they had sacrificed to build, being unjustly taken from them, because they would not give up their convictions of right, and their religious liberty. But many have had their profit. They have suffered the spoiling of their goods but they have held fast by what they

believed to be for them the true and right, and they are stronger and better today because of that stand, a profit with which no temporal loss can compare.

If, on the other hand, any have gained an end, at the cost, in the least degree, of truth, honour, justice, right, they have lost in values eternal. They have lost in soul.

As to the profit and loss of the Churches concerned, this writing has chiefly to do with the Presbyterian Church. The profit and loss to the others is left to themselves to estimate, with the remark, in passing, that any Church which is founded upon wrong to others, whatever its gain in numbers or possessions, has suffered loss. The outward, temporary, material gain may be boastfully measured by man, the loss in honor, in soul, is known only to God.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has manifestly had a large material loss. Church homes builded and bequests left in trust for the promotion of the work of that Church for the Kingdom of God have been unjustly taken from her and given to others, in disregard of every principle of justice and right, and of the pledged guarantee of the laws of the land given through years that are gone.

A second apparent loss to that Church is that part of her former membership withdrew to another Church. But that is not always a loss. When part of a regiment or garrison becomes disaffected, and wishes to surrender, their withdrawal is not a loss but a gain. Some who withdrew were indeed a loss;—sincere, earnest, Christian people, who were coerced or misled. But the withdrawal of those who were active in attempting the extinction of the Presbyterian Church is a great gain to that Church.

The lessened membership of the Presbyterian Church in Canada is of interest, however, not as a matter of profit and loss but of history. The reported membership of that Church, before the withdrawal of some to another Church was nearly 380,000. But these figures are modified by two facts.

In the final voting by congregations when, in most cases, every possible vote was secured, the average available membership of congregations was found to be from twenty to twenty-five per cent less than the reported membership. Many communion rolls had not been purged for years, and contained the names of members long absent or dead. It is thus probable that the actual membership was little over 300,000.

Further, through years of home mission work in new territory the Presbyterian Church had received many members of other Communions, who joined her for the time as the nearest Protestant Church, and, as was natural, many of these went into the United Church with their fellow churchmen of former days. From the two above facts it is probably well within the mark to state that the actual Presbyterian membership of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, before the withdrawal of some to another Church, was considerably under three hundred thousand.

Today the communicant membership of that Church is nearly 180,000, and these are Presbyterians who have kept their faith in the face of coercion, confiscation and loss. There are, in addition, many Presbyterians, all across Canada, in communities where the Presbyterian Church has not yet been reorganized.

The real loss therefore to the Presbyterian Church in Canada is some of her church homes and possessions, a loss familiar to Presbyterians in other lands in ages gone.

What are the profits? One profit is that Presbyterians know their Church better than hitherto. For years her distinctive features, her pledge to truth and freedom, her doctrine or religious belief and her polity or church government, had received too little attention. Her people were not instructed as they should have been, and when, during the twenty years' conflict they were continually told by some of their ministers that their Church was antiquated, behind the times, some were led to believe it.

Now that they have studied their Church they find that in doctrine or religious belief she is based firmly upon the unchanging word of God, which is the only truth that can meet and satisfy the unchanging need of man. They find that in polity or government their Church is a pure democracy, based upon the will of the people, the highest type of government known among men. They find that the Presbyterian Church all down her history has been a chief human cause and inspiration of the world's true progress in liberty and democracy, and that the new type of polity urged upon them in recent years, under the cloak of "unity" and "union," was a return to old time autocracy and despotism. This knowledge of their Church is to Presbyterians a great gain.

Another profit to the Presbyterian Church in Canada is that knowing her better her people love and prize her more. The better they know her the more they realize that she is well worth maintaining and defending, that her blotting out in Canada would be a loss to liberty, civilization and Christianity, and that her continuance in Canada is gain to Canada and the world.

A third profit to the Presbyterian Church in Canada is the deeper, more active interest that her people now take in her welfare and work. Many who in past years took little part in that work are now among her most active supporters and helpers, to the great good of themselves and their Church and the kingdom of God.

A fourth and greatest gain to the Presbyterian Church is that the purpose and effort put forth to maintain and defend their convictions of right has been to her people a blessing untold. A stand, even to sacrifice, for conscience sake, is the best of moral and spiritual training, and the necessity for such a stand has been a profit to the Presbyterian Church in Canada, greater than any gain in members or possessions that could have come to her. She has lost some property. She has saved her soul.

XXXI.

SOME NEEDS OF THE CHURCH.

The Christian Church has often suffered from attempt to supply what she does not need and from neglect to supply what she does need. Those who would help the Church must see that they are meeting a real need. Otherwise they do not help.

Some things the Presbyterian Church in Canada does not need. She does not need a new head, temporal or spiritual, single or multiple. For her, Christ is the only King and Head of the Church. All have equal access to Him and are equal before Him and in His Church. Her ideal of the Church is in Matthew 23:8, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

The Presbyterian Church does not need a new Bible, a new revelation or message from God to men. Men may study the works of God, and find ever new wonders of His wisdom, power and goodness. But everything needful for man to know of God, what He has done for man, what He will do for man, what He would have man do, how man may find God and forgiveness and peace, and how man can best serve and honour God, is given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which the Church now has.

The statement sometimes heard, that God is revealing himself continuously to men, now as of old, may be a great truth or a great untruth. If intended to teach that God, by His Spirit, is continually revealing Himself to all who will receive Him, leading them to see more clearly, day by day, the beauty and wonder of His love, as made known in His word and in Jesus Christ; enabling them, day by day, to yield themselves more fully in loving surrender to Him, and in Him to find day by day, fuller rest for their souls, and new strength and inspiration for service, then it is a great and glorious truth.

But if the statement is intended to mean that God is

today making to the Church or to men new revelations of Himself, of His "wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth," that He is revealing new ways of finding God and forgiveness of sin, new ways of gaining peace and rest of soul for the sinner, new conditions, standards or ideals of service towards God or man which are not found in Scripture, then it is a great untruth. No other teaching has ever been given among men which can add to, take from, or supersede the teaching of Scripture as to "What man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man." Anything new, in addition to the Scriptures, is not of God but of man.

Nor does the Presbyterian Church need, as was so often heard in the twenty years' conflict, a new theology or creed, a new system of doctrine or religious belief and teaching, for that to which she now stands pledged is the unchanging truth of God's Word as that truth is summed up in her tried and tested Standards, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, which she accepts and adopts, not because others in the past have accepted them, but because she believes them "to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God." She needs and wants no other theology or creed than the wondrous love for sinners, and the wondrous redemption from sin, of which these Standards tell in their peerless human summary of the teaching of Scripture.

Some time since the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., considered revising the Confession. After years of work, two short chapters were added in explanation, but the Confession was untouched. Its truth, according to Scripture, could not be questioned.

Nor does the Presbyterian Church need what some in recent years have sought to impose upon her, a new polity or church government, for she has now the highest type, government only and wholly by the choice of an enlightened people, as guided by the Spirit of God. If, owing to human imperfection that government may at any time seem in-

efficient, the need is not a different type of government but better men.

Nor does the Presbyterian Church need a new ritual for her worship. Her ideal of worship is "in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." Others may worship Him just as truly amid much "enrichment" of form and ceremony and outward splendor, and God meets in loving fellowship with His true children everywhere, whether their surroundings be plain or ornate. But the Presbyterian ideal is the whole mind and heart given to the great fact that it is in the immediate presence of God, yielding itself to His Spirit, and, as to the outward form, simply "all things decently and in order."

This writing is not in criticism of ritualistic Churches. May they have much of the Presence Divine and be blessed in bringing humanity to God. This writing is simply in protest against any attempt at ritualizing the Presbyterian Church. Three things in that Church usually mark a decline in spiritual life;—contempt for doctrine, clamor for "church union," and craving for ritual; in the vain attempt to galvanize the Church into a new life by contemplation of its own greatness or the color of its worship.

The early reformers, Calvin, Knox and others, are sometimes quoted as authority for a Presbyterian ritual. But it should be remembered that while these reformers took their theology from the Scriptures, they took their ideal of ritual from the Church of Rome, in which most of them had been reared, a ritual taken to some extent from the Old Testament dispensation which had passed away, and in larger measure, in the fourth and fifth centuries, from the various cults of pagan worship, to please the heathen peoples of the Roman Empire.

In the Apostolic Presbyterian Church there was neither great organization nor gorgeous ritual, but the Spirit of God was there, and there was conviction and conversion. Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, and Felix trembled. Peter at Pentecost preached

a crucified and risen Christ and there were that day added to the Church three thousand souls.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, however, while in no need along any of the above lines, has some great and pressing needs. One need supreme is knowledge of the great truths of Divine Revelation.

But is not the Spirit of God, revival from on high, the supreme need of the Church, and is not that Spirit given in answer to prayer? Is not prayer, therefore, and more prayer, the supreme need of the Church?

All true, and yet not all the truth! Sunshine and shower are needful for harvest. But the farmer who would leave everything to sunshine and shower and neglect sowing the seed while he prayed for rain would be mocking nature and nature's God, and would reap accordingly.

So it is in the spiritual realm. The Spirit of God is necessary to spiritual results, but the Spirit usually works where He has something upon which and through which to work. Here too is seed time and harvest, and, as a rule, no seeding, no harvest.

The Spirit of God is Almighty and can renew the human heart, even where it is in dense ignorance. But usually He does not work in that way. As a rule it is where there is a knowledge of Christ and of the great truths of salvation, that the Spirit of God moves men, women and children to trust in Christ, and to yield themselves in loving surrender to Him.

There is a best time for giving and getting that knowledge. As in nature, it is life's springtime, when the mind is receptive and the heart tender, when that which is learned is remembered. Better still the Spirit of God often applies that truth in childhood, renews the heart and leads in childhood to life's greatest choice, decision for Christ. Best of all, Christian parents have the right and warrant to pray that the hearts of their children may be renewed, "born again," in infancy, then, when taught in childhood the

great truths of God's word, they give a whole full life to Christ, which is His right, instead of the dregs at life's end.

There is a best way of gaining that knowledge, by committing it to memory, as seed is committed to the soil, and held by that soil, until it springs up and brings forth fruit.

If, for a time, that seed in childhood's heart may seem to lie dormant, yet when God's call is heard and the heart is moved, the response to that call is usually from those who have been taught in childhood, while others, though perhaps impressed, their hearts softened, yet with little knowledge of the truth, the impressions pass, leaving them as before, only more hardened, more difficult to impress again, like the bare, seedless earth when it hardens after the softening of a summer rain.

Hence the need and value of having children commit to memory, and oft repeat to make thoroughly their own, some of the great passages of Scripture, and the central truths of the Christian faith as they are set forth in question and answer in the Shorter Catechism.

When parents faithfully sow the seed, teach their children, pray with them and for them in family worship, they can honestly ask God to bless that teaching. But parents praying for their children while neglecting to teach them the truth that God has given to guide them to Himself, is like the farmer praying for harvest when he has neglected sowing his fields in Spring.

There is no limit to the power of God, and "men ought always to pray and not to faint." But God works by the use of means, and when parents, teachers and ministers are faithful in teaching, giving knowledge, sowing the seed, then can they with confidence pray for results.

Home teaching and family worship have long been held a duty and a privilege in the Presbyterian Church. As a result that Church stands strong today, and her future depends very largely upon the faithful continuance of that home teaching and family worship.

Teaching the children in the home is God's own plan.

In the Old Testament His people are commanded—"Ye shall lay up these words in your heart . . . . . and ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up."

Christ's last command was "Go ye therefore, teach all nations . . . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Teach! Teach! Teach! This is a supreme need of the Church so far as lies within the power of man to supply that need.

A second great need of the Presbyterian Church is for the people to realize more fully that they are the Church. Often in Christian history, as in recent years in Canada, there has been the claim by some clergy and officials that they were "The Church," with right supreme to dictate change of faith to the Church, and claim that the people should submit to change of faith at their official will.

Those who prefer that type of Church should be free to choose it, but they have no right to impose it upon others, and Presbyterians should realize that such is not the ideal of their Church.

In the management of temporal affairs in the Church the duties and rights of the people are very clearly laid down in the sixth chapter of Acts. The infant Church had a benevolent fund, its only financial interest. There was some complaint about the management of that fund. The twelve apostles called a meeting of the members of the church and said to them, "It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business, but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

That apostolic charge is the best and highest guidance for the Church today. The more the people realize and assume responsibility in all that is connected with the busi-

ness and financial affairs of the Church, and the more the ministers "give themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word," the more will the Church prosper in all departments of her life and work, financial and spiritual.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada in apostolic fashion, has her Board of Administration, all laymen. If she would succeed let her keep that Board as it now is, scriptural, apostolic. For that Board the Church and her ministry should give earnest thanks, also for the measure in which so many of her members have devoted themselves to her work. May their numbers and their interest increase.

A third special need of the Presbyterian Church is that the elders should realize the importance of their office, both in the congregation and beyond, in all the Courts of the Church. In the congregation ministers come and go. The Head of the Church, guiding His people by His Spirit, calls ministers from one charge to another as may seem best for the work of the Church as a whole.

But the elder usually spends his life in one congregation, among those who know him best and have chosen him to office in the Church. His life and work is thus more closely bound up with the one congregation than is usually the case with the minister. In a special manner its well-being is his care, and while the minister gives himself to the teaching of the Word, in public and in private, with the elders should rest in large measure the administration of the spiritual affairs of the congregation.

A special duty of the eldership, in the present lack of ministers, is to provide for the holding of regular religious service, of some kind, on the Sabbath. That service may at times be conducted as a Sabbath School, a young peoples' meeting, a prayer meeting, a praise meeting, or with the reading by someone of a printed sermon, with fitting devotional services, or by combining different methods or varying the service from week to week.

The value to a community of religious services on the

Sabbath is not in the pleasure of listening to a well delivered sermon by a minister, but in keeping before the people the great facts of God, His goodness, truth and love, and man's responsibility, duty and destiny. There are few Presbyterian communities where religious services could not be conducted by the people, and they would be sometimes of greater value than if a minister were present, for they would develop a greater sense of responsibilty on the part of the people.

When the Scottish settlers came to Old Kildonan, on the Red River, near where Winnipeg now is, they could not get a minister of their own, but they maintained their family worship and their Sabbath services for nearly forty years, until a minister came. Their work and its results is one of the bright pages in Canada's religious history.

But in the Presbyterian Church the eldership is an office of the Church as a whole, and for life or good conduct, as is the office of the ministry. With the elder as with the minister rests the management of all the affairs of the Church in her higher Courts, in Presbytery, Synod and Assembly. The elders should study their Church, her doctrine, polity and history, that they may be the better fitted to take their part in the management of her affairs in all her church courts.

Every Presbyterian congregation should have its elders' Association, distinct from the Session, elders meeting by themselves to discuss their own work. In larger centres and in cities they could meet as larger Associations, and at meetings of Synod or Assembly they could meet occasionally, not to receive addresses from ministers, but to consider and discuss their own affairs, as do ministers in their ministerial Associations.

For the eldership and the grand body of men who have been chosen to that office by the people, the Presbyterian Church in Canada should give thanks, and should pray for them and encourage them in their work.

A fourth need of the Presbyterian Church in Canada is more of her own young men for her ministry. Deeply thankful should she be for those from other lands who have come to help her in her time of need. But no Church can prosper which continues dependent for supply of ministers from outside herself.

The lack of men for the ministry, unless in exceptional cases, as at present in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, is usually a result of low spiritual life, for where that life is strong it will show itself in parents consecrating sons to the ministry and in young men offering themselves for that work. Thank God for His true messengers from whereever they may come, but no Church can be said to be a living Church which does not make earnest effort to provide its own ministry.

Not only should a Church provide the men, but should train them for that ministry. The Theological College should be a spiritual centre for the Church, giving not only education and mental training but also and especially, spiritual uplift; prayer, precept and example on the part of the teaching staff combining to inspire young men and send them forth good scholars, good preachers, good pastors, good ministers of Jesus Christ, eager to win men, women and children to Him.

The most vivid memory of a visit to Princeton Theological Seminary in 1870, is that of the Sabbath afternoon devotional meeting of professors and students. The elder Hodge, his face and voice a benediction, spoke and prayed. "From scenes like these Old Princeton's glory springs that made her loved at home, revered abroad."

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into His harvest," and then seek earnestly to answer that prayer.

To Christian homes that harvest must look for its reapers. Christian parents should realize that theirs is the duty and privilege of providing those reapers.

XXXII.

THREE PERILS OF THE CHURCH

THE boasted aim of "church union" is to end "isms" in the Church. These are its constant theme of ridicule and reproach.

Most "isms" in the Church are simply the expression of men's convictions of right, doing God's will as they see it. The absurdity of the situation; the place where ridicule, if anywhere, is deserved, is in this special "ism," "union-ism," assuming the right to drive out all others; a few men getting together and planning to abolish all "isms" but their own.

But some "isms" in the Church are a real peril. Of these, three are chief;—Rationalism in doctrine;—Ritualism in worship;—and Officialism in polity. To some of these, more especially to Rationalism and Officialism, is owing the recent attempt to blot out the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Against these three perils the Church must ever guard if she would fulfil her mission as a Church of Christ and be effective in promoting His Kingdom.

Rationalism in doctrine or religious belief is a peril, because instead of using reason as an aid to faith it substitutes reason for faith.

Faith takes the Word of God as the supreme authority in things spiritual and seeks to follow and obey that Word. Rationalism takes that Word and sits in judgment upon it, receiving only what suits its own fancy.

Faith accepts the teaching of Scripture that man is lost in sin, away from God and unable of himself to find his way back to God. Rationalism views man as in a process of development working himself upward and Godward.

Faith accepts the teaching of Scripture that Christ came "to seek and to save that which was lost." Rationalism sits in judgment upon Christ and gives Him a place

according to its own fancy, in the scale of human development, as an example for those lower down to follow in their upward climb.

Faith accepts the great truths that centre in the cross, truths of God and His justice and love, of Christ and His sacrifice, of sin and atonement, of judgment and destiny. Rationalism treats these truths with a speculative interest, and attaches more importance to "getting together." Having little use for definite religious belief, it is usually an advocate of "church union" regardless of belief.

Faith points men to Christ as a Saviour from sin, as their only hope, and bids them haste to Him. Rationalism keeps them busy discussing the various ways that have been suggested by men for rising to better things.

Faith's ideal of the Church is the body of those who profess to have been saved by Christ and who are banded together to make known that salvation to others. Rationalism makes the Church a respectable social, philanthropic or "religio-political" association, to promote, in a general way, whatever may seem desirable at the time.

When the "Church Union Committee," followed by a majority in the General Assembly, cut out all subscription to any definite Christian truth, even to the "Statement of Doctrine" in its own "Basis of Union," it showed clearly the presence and working of that Rationalism which is ever a peril to the Church.

A second peril to the Church is Ritualism in its worship. Worship is the converse of the soul with God. Anything that diverts the attention of mind and heart from God in worship, interferes, by so much, with that converse, and makes the worship so much more a thing of form and less a reality; and the worshipper, in less direct intercourse with God, receives less of His Spirit and strength.

In proportion therefore as a Church admits into its worship the formal and ritual, beyond the demands of reverence and order, in that proportion must it lose in

spiritual power, and become ineffective as a Church of Christ for the awakening of men and leading them to Him. The impressiveness of ceremonial is not the influence of the Spirit of God.

Ritualism does not awaken men to a sense of sin and and their need of a Saviour. Nor does it impel them to go forth and tell others of that Saviour. Rather does it lead them to rest as they are, having performed the outward to neglect the inward, to neglect God. The whole history of the Church is a testimony as to the peril of ritualism to the spiritual life and power of the Church. If any desire ritual and believe it an aid to their worship, let them join a Church which has ritual. It is their right. But they have no right to attempt imposing ritualism in the Presbyterian Church.

A third peril to the Church is Officialism, those chosen to office in the Church going beyond their rights, attempting to make of the Church a machine moving at their will rather than a living organism, moving at the will of the whole, as guided by the Spirit of God.

The love of place and power is human and has always been in the Church. James and John, two of the twelve apostles, asked Christ to give them the two chief places in His Kingdom, seats on His right and left. The name of Diotrephes is handed down to all time for one thing; he loved "to have the pre-eminence."

The Reformation in the sixteenth century was in part the Church throwing off the yoke of clerical officialism which it had borne so long. The crisis in the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1925 was the same repudiation of officialism and assertion of liberty, on a smaller scale.

One great principle of the Presbyterian Church is the parity of presbyters. Ruling and teaching elders, both chosen by the people, under definite conditions, are in complete equality as to their judicatory powers in the management of the Church; and none of either have any

right to power or precedence over others. Nor, as a rule, do many attempt to usurp such right.

But all are human. No Church can hope to be free from such attempts and can only be careful to guard against them. Officialism in the Church may be limited to few, but if others quietly submit, the few may stamp the polity of that Church.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada should remember where officialism led her during recent years, and what it cost her of struggle to be free, and should carefully guard against any beginnings of that "ism" in the days to come.

To the above three perils of the Church, a close fourth is the "Unionism" already mentioned, which fills so large a place in the speech and writing of some church circles today.

"Unionism" is a peril to the Church in that it places emphasis in the wrong place, upon the wrong things, upon the outward and formal rather than the inward and spiritual. It does not put first things first, does not make truth supreme. In the case of "Church Union" in Canada it cut out all pledge to any definite Christian truth in order to "get together."

XXXIII.

"THE WORD OF GOD" AND "TABLES"

In these brief and simple words do the apostles sum up the spiritual and the material in church life and work, as told in the sixth chapter of Acts:—

"In those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples" (the members of the church) "and said:—

" 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.'

"And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen," etc . . . . . "And the word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."

Note three things:—(1) The apostles direct that, in the Church, the spiritual and material should be in different hands, the people, in the latter, having entire responsibility,—(2) This plan of the apostles gave universal satisfaction, "the saying pleased the whole multitude,"—(3) It helped the spiritual work of the Church—"The number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."

These three things are true of the Church today in Canada as in its beginnings, near twenty centuries ago.

"Tables," in the Presbyterian Church, centre largely in two places, in the individual congregation, and in the Board of Administration for the whole Church.

Taking first the congregation, the apostles here teach that its temporal affairs should be in the hands of the people.

With Presbyterians in Canada, in earlier years, this apostolic Presbyterian plan largely prevailed. But in revising Books of Rules there crept in the provision that at the business meetings of the congregation the minister should preside.

This was an intrusion of clericalism into the rights of the people, which, at the time was scarcely noticed, and made little difference in the practice of most congregations.

But from that intrusion the Church greatly suffered in her recent struggle for religious liberty. "Unionist" ministers, presiding at meetings of the congregation, controlled and overruled the procedure of those meetings to destroy the Church, and church homes were lost to Presbyterians by this special feature of injustice and wrong. As the Presbyterian Church is now revising her rules this unpresbyterian provision will doubtless disappear.

Apart from that special experience, and in the ordinary work of the Church, there is no reason why the minister should have the right to preside at the business meetings.

It is not scriptural. The words of the apostles in the early church, as quoted above, clearly condemn it.

It is not Presbyterian but prelatic. It places the minister in a special class, above and independent of the people, with special rights, even over their temporal affairs in the Church. It is a custom in churches where—not the people but the clergy and officials are "The Church."

There is no need for it. In most churches there are other men as well fitted for that work. If not they will quickly learn when they realize that it is their place and right. The women of the Church have no difficulty in conducting their own business meetings.

There are, on the other hand, many reasons why the people should have the entire management of the temporal affairs of the congregation.

It is their right. They are responsible for these things in the congregation, and only by having the management

will they realize that responsibility and in highest measure fulfil it. The minister is responsible for teaching and practicing the duty and privilege of giving. But for the material things of the Church the people are responsible.

It gives the people their rightful place as independent freemen in the Church of Christ, not as inferiors in place or class, over whom other men have precedence or right.

It develops in the people a higher type of church life, makes them more fully realize their direct responsibility to God, and not merely to the minister.

It develops a higher type of ministry, enabling them, in the words of the apostles, to "give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

It makes that ministry more effective. When it was first adopted, in that first Christian congregation in Jerusalem, all were pleased, the murmuring ceased, "and the multitude of the disciples increased in Jerusalem greatly."

The minister presides, as is fitting, in all the spiritual work of the congregation, the work for which he is trained, for which he is called by the people, and for which he is responsible. With two services on Sabbath, and a midweek meeting, he presides, during the year, at one hundred and fifty-six regular meetings of the congregation, besides special occasions, and it is a small measure of right for the people to have under their control the one meeting in the year for which they are responsible.

The other chief place of "tables" in the Church is the Board of Administration for the whole Church. Presbyterians in Canada may well give thanks that, in this respect, their Church is now organized on purely apostolic Presbyterian lines, where the people are the Church, with a Board of Administration, wholly of business men, representing the people, to care for the financing of her general missionary, educational and benevolent work.

The men on that Board are from the tried and successful business men of the Church. They seek no position or

office in the Church. They receive no reward in any way for their time and work. For the most part they pay their own expenses in doing that work. They give freely of their time, their business experience and their expert business knowledge and ability, and the Church, ministers and people, should be thankful for such men thus devoting their time, means and knowledge to the Lord's "tables."

That Board of Administration has no authority in the Church, except what is given it by the General Assembly, which is made up of an equal number of ministers and elders, with a minister always presiding as moderator.

That Board of business men is appointed by the Assembly to manage its finances, its "tables," just as wise business men everywhere choose the most experienced available financial ability to manage their business affairs.

The Assembly, in its other departments, acts upon this same principle of appointing men to work for which they have special training. It has, for example, a General Board of Missions, to manage all its mission work, home and foreign. On the Board are forty-eight men, all but seven of them ministers. It has a Board of Education, with thirty-two men, all but five of them ministers; a Board of Sabbath Schools and Young Peoples Societies, with thirty men, all but four of them ministers, and a Board on correspondence with other Churches throughout the world, with thirteen men, all of them ministers.

If there be added to the above that ministers preside as moderators at all times, in all the courts of the Church, in Session, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly, it will be seen how small a part the people have in administering the affairs of the Church. But for "tables," for the material things of the Church, the Assembly wisely chooses men of widest experience along financial lines.

There is the further advantage, that when the need of the "table" is specially urgent, a call to the people from some of themselves—"This is our work," will make a stronger appeal than a call from ministers, "This is your work."

XXXIV.

THE RECOVERY

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is builded upon a Rock, upon "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever,"—"and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that Church, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock." It was sore stricken, but few chapters in church history can equal its wonderful recovery.

The storm was perhaps fiercest in the Maritimes and and on the prairies. There the keepers of the Church in largest proportion, proved disloyal to their trust and to their ordination vows to the Presbyterian Church, "to maintain and defend" her, and used their positions of trust in attempt to destroy the Church and deprive her people of their rights.

In both Maritimes and prairies it was reminder of storms long familiar. In the former, to change the figure, like the tempests on their rock-bound shores, it burst upon the ship. Her deck load was swept overboard. Some spars and sails were carried away. But she weathered the gale, riding triumphantly the seas, and again sails on, with chart and compass and captain as before, and so long as she sails by these, she is safe amid all storms.

On the prairie, to change again the figure, the storm came, cold and relentless as any blizzard that ever swept the plains, carrying away church homes and leaving multitudes unsheltered. But here too it passed, and loyal hearts remained, and once more, all over the west, in centre after centre, is being repeated the story of forty years ago, when Presbyterian pioneers builded their homes and their churches, when Dr. James Robertson, our great home mission Superintendent said, "The Presbyterian Church has a message which should be given to every community in the west," and spent his life proclaiming that message.

A feature in that recovery is the work of the Women's Missionary Society. In some cases, where the Presbyterian Church had apparently been blotted out, the first step in reorganization has been a Woman's Missionary Auxiliary, and the first Presbyterian service by one of the earnest workers of that Society.

Today the Presbyterian Church in Canada, with nearly one hundred and eighty thousand members, in some thirteen hundred congregations, grouped in forty-three presbyteries and eight synods, extends from Atlantic to Pacific shores, from Canada's rising to setting sun;—welcoming to her membership all of pure life who accept her conditions of church membership;—rejoicing in the success of every Church which professes to be of Christ and which, by life and work, shows its profession true;—giving thanks for her own new found freedom, and praying that she may be kept from worldliness and sin, and be made more effective in service for Christ, a blessing to Canada and the world.

XXXV.

METHODIST AND CONGREGATIONALIST

Any statement of the twenty years' conflict for religious liberty by the Presbyterian Church in Canada would be incomplete without some mention of the other Churches whose representatives had a part in the attempt to take away that liberty, and without whose political influence and pressure the unjust seizure of Presbyterian church homes and the confiscation of Presbyterian trusts would never have been sanctioned by Parliament.

The Congregationalists were few, but their leaders had a part, quite proportionate to their numbers, in the public legislative action regarding the attempted merging.

The chief influence, however, with which Presbyterians had to contend, outside their own Church, in the struggle for their liberties and rights, was by the the leaders of the Methodist Church, not the Methodist people, but "those at the head," who constituted that Church so far as its public action was concerned.

In 1911, at the time of the first vote in the Presbyterian Church, fourteen years before the crisis in 1925, the Methodist people were allowed a vote upon the question of merging their Church, and more than thirty thousand of them voted against it. They were never permitted a second general vote. It has been strongly claimed that had such opportunity been given the opposition would have been vastly greater.

It is true that few of the Methodist people remained out of the United Church. For this there were two main reasons; first, both ministers and people in that Church were accustomed to accept what was decreed and provided for them by "those at the head";—and secondly, apart from the name, there was for them little apparent change. The United Church was in some respects the Methodist Church under a new name.

To this likeness, however, there is one all important exception, which doubtless many of them did not realize at the time, viz., that the new "United Church" had dropped all definite pledge to the great truths of the Christian faith, truths to which Methodism had been definitely pledged, and which made that Methodism, for so long a time, so great a power for good.

The motives of the Methodist leaders in pressing the church merger are perhaps best set forth in the words of their "General Superintendent," in a published address to the Methodist people, in which he wrote—"I would say with all conviction that if the major Churches of Protestantism cannot unite, the battle which is going on for the religious control of our country will be lost in the next few years. I refer not to the school question only, but to the whole movement in Canada, in the religio-political realm."

No words could more plainly state the aim and purpose to lower the Church of Christ from its exalted spiritual mission of beseeching men to be reconciled to God, and to make it a machine to win the "battle". . . . "in the religio-political realm."

Whatever their motives, the Methodist leaders were a deciding factor in driving through Parliament the "iniquitous" "Church Union Bill," which sanctioned the seizure of Presbyterian church homes and the confiscation of sacred trusts on a scale never before known in Canada. Had it not been for those leaders, the Bill would never have been passed in Parliament. Even with their pressure it was carried only by a small majority. Of the one hundred and seventy-eight members in Parliament from east of the Great Lakes, representing the main body of the people and the Church, a majority of fifty-three to fifty voted against the "Church Union Bill" and it was driven through Parliament by a small but solid bloc from west of the Lakes, among whom were scarcely any Presbyterians, while two or three of them were ex-Methodist ministers who had gone into political life. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has

therefore the Methodist leaders to thank for the unjust legislation which permitted the seizure of so many of her church homes and the confiscation of her possessions.

Presbyterians have, however, sincere sympathy with the many good and true Methodist people who, against their will and wish, were driven into the United Church, and would rejoice to see once more in Canada a revived, old-time Methodist Church, with its distinctive evangelical message and work.

Besides their pressure in Parliament, the Methodist leaders were an influence in the Presbyterian General Assembly. In 1916, the Assembly at Winnipeg resolved "to unite with the Methodist and Congregationalist Churches, and to notify these Churches accordingly."

Henceforth through the following nine years, until the crisis in 1925, "those at the head" of the Methodist Church never failed to give reminder that the Presbyterians were pledged to them. The General Superintendent of the Methodist Church declared in the public press—"If we look at the ethical obligations under which the Churches have placed themselves it will give us an answer to the question, 'Will church union ever come to pass'? My confidence in its certainty rests, among other things, on the good faith of the Churches concerned."

He ignored the fact of which there had often been notice, that those in the Presbyterian General Assembly who, in 1916, passed that resolution, had no right or power to pledge the Church. He ignored too the action of the General Assembly a year later, in 1917, when it halted the "Union" movement and resolved "that no attempt be made at the present time to state the action proper to any future period, but that the whole question be left to the leadings of Providence in the experience of the people and the lessons of the war."

While Methodist leaders thus gave reminder, their co-wreckers in the Presbyterian Assembly as continually

re-echoed the reminder—"We must keep faith with the Methodists";—ignoring the fact that they had no right to pledge the Church to the Methodists or to any other;—ignoring too their own obligation to keep faith with the Presbyterian people, as pledged by unanimous resolutions of the Assembly in 1905 and 1912, that "union must carry the consent of the entire membership" and have "practically unanimous action";—ignoring above all their obligation to keep faith with their own solemn ordination vows to the Presbyterian Church when admitted to her ministry, vows "to maintain and defend the same and to follow no divisive course from the present order established therein."

XXXVI.

CO-OPERATION

Two or more Churches combining to do a certain work, with their joint support and under their joint control, will perhaps fairly define church co-operation. Some religious work, as for example that of the great Bible Societies, while supported by the members of different Churches is not controlled by the Churches, and the co-operation is more indirect.

Co-operation requires and implies two things, that each Church approve the religious teaching and work of the other, and that each Church has confidence in the honesty of the other.

But even where there is approval and confidence, co-operation, as often advocated, is based largely upon a wrong ideal of the Church. In outward material things, depending upon numbers or outward strength, co-operation is often an advantage. Two parties in the State can combine and carry a political measure which otherwise would be impossible. The free nations a few years since combined against despotism and saved the world from bondage.

But the Church of Christ is spiritual, its influence spiritual, its impact upon the world spiritual. If, by its numbers, the Church seeks to command rather than persuade, aims to be a power "in the whole religio-political realm," it descends from its exalted position as a Church of Christ and becomes a "religio-political" party. The true influence and power of the Church depends not upon the extent of its numbers but upon the depth of its spiritual life, not upon its co-operation with other Churches but upon its co-operation with the Spirit of God.

Perhaps the greatest co-operative attempt and failure in all Church history was about a dozen years ago in the U.S.A. A few men conceived an "Inter Church Movement" for the evangelization of the world. They planned an annual

budget of over three hundred and thirty millions of dollars. Half that amount was estimated as the giving of the Churches for their work, to be managed by themselves as usual, but reckoned as part of the great co-operative total. The other half was expected from men outside the Churches who were "too big" to be interested in petty "denominational" work, but who would give grandly if something worthy and non-denominational were set before them.

The promoters of that movement secured the approval of some in official position in a few of the Churches, opened vast offices, engaged a small army of clerks and spent lavishly of borrowed money in promoting the undertaking.

But while the Churches continued as formerly their work, the expected giving by others did not materialize, and in a few months the huge scheme collapsed, with assets nil and liabilities of some eight millions of dollars. The Churches were under no legal obligation for this amount but some of them assumed a share of its payment, a burden which, in more than one case, hung like a millstone for years.

As a rule the better way for any Church to extend the Kingdom of God is to devote its energies along the line of its own Church work, with charity towards all others, "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," rather than by dissipating time and means in new machinery for co-operative work, or perhaps stifling its own initiative and hindering true progress by awaiting the convenience of others when neither equity nor unity requires such delay.

Passing from the more general aspect of this subject to the practical question of co-operation by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, under present conditions, with the United Church of Canada, some facts may be noted.

1. At a meeting in Atlantic City in March, 1926, with representation from Canada and the U.S.A., a delegation of some half dozen leaders from the United Church of Canada was present. A paper had been read on "Co-operation" and the subject was under discussion. One of the members

of that delegation spoke in substance as follows:—"It has been thought well by those of us here from our Church that having taken part in the work of co-operation in Canada, I should state the attitude of our Church upon the subject. It is the judgment of our Church, from our experience in the past, that co-operation is only desirable or advisable with a view to union."

Those, therefore, who would co-operate with the United Church of Canada must either be prepared for union with that Church or be constantly on guard against it, an attitude which is not likely to yield largely in higher spiritual results.

2. For many years The Presbyterian Church in Canada honestly co-operated with other Evangelical Churches, believing that such co-operation would meet all the needs of our growing country, east and west. But, more recently, those who were attempting to force the merging of the Churches claimed that all such co-operation had only been possible with a view to union, that the people had been so informed, and that this promise must be fulfilled.

A dishonest advantage was thus taken of honest co-operation, and as there is not yet manifest in the United Church any change of mind or heart towards such dishonest advantage, but rather the opposite, those who co-operate with that Church can only expect like advantage to be taken in the future.

3. There cannot be true co-operation unless each Church approves the work done and the teaching given by the other. A Church which accepts the teaching of the Bible as to God, Christ, sin, salvation, destiny, cannot honestly co-operate with a Church which does not accept that teaching. In this connection note a recent fact.

The New Outlook, the official organ of the United Church of Canada, in its issue of March 16, 1927, contains an editorial on "Church Union in the United States," which quotes with approval from the "joint statement" of the proposed union between the Congregationalist Churches and the Universalist Churches of the U.S.A., to the effect

that these Churches are "branches of the same parent stock"; that "the historic reasons for their separation have practically disappeared"; that "there is no longer any reason for separation." In other words there is now no difference between the Congregational and Universalist Churches in the U.S.A.

The New Outlook goes on to speak editorially of these two Churches in the U.S.A. as "sister churches, so near at hand and so akin to us in their faith and aims." According to the above statement of its Official Organ the United Church of Canada is "akin in faith and aims" to the Universalist Church, and the Church which co-operates with the United Church endorses by its action the Universalist Church, blots out essential spiritual distinctions, rejects the teaching of Scripture and of Christ's own words as to the final destiny of good and ill.

4. As previously stated, in order to co-operate with another Church there must be fullest confidence in the honesty, justice and truth of that Church. This writing has no word to say of the people in the United Church of Canada, many of them the excellent of the earth. But that Church is not its people. It is a civil corporation. That Corporation, through its leaders, has done the Presbyterian Church in Canada a great injustice and wrong, and so long as that Corporation is under the control of those from whom the Presbyterian Church has suffered betrayal, and is suffering injustice and wrong, there cannot be confidence, and without confidence there can be no true co-operation. It is not a question of forgiveness or of a Christian spirit, but of lack of confidence.

The "conclusion of the whole matter" is that the present duty of Presbyterians in Canada is to do for Christ, with all their might, through the medium of their own Church, what their hands find to do, seeking greater co-operation with the spirit of Christ and praying that all honest work of all who profess the name of Christ may be frutiful of good to men and glory to God.

XXXVII

THE "REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM"

The "Reunion of Christendom" has furnished theme for many a tongue and pen, and has captured and raptured multitudes of earnest souls who seem strangely blinded to the grand reality which already exists, the spiritual oneness, in Christ, of all His true followers of every name, a unity real and eternal, and who waste time and strength and means which should be devoted to the extension of Christendom in pursuing the illusory phantom of a temporary outward uniformity, which can never be attained so long as men are free to choose for themselves in matters of faith and worship; and which, if it could be attained, would bring neither good to men nor glory to God, but would tend rather, as so often in the past, to ambition for worldly power, to human self-conceit and pride in its own greatness and strength. "Is not this great Babylon that we have builded?"

The reunion of Christendom suggests many questions. What is Christendom? What are the divisions of Christendom? When was Christendom one? When and why did Christendom divide? Can Christendom be reunited? Has such reunion ever been attempted and how? Are there signs of its coming?

Christendom, as the term is commonly used, means the visible Church of Christ in the world; all of every name "who profess and call themselves Christians."

The "divisions of Christendom" do not usually mean divided or conflicting interests or aims in Christendom but simply the different divisions and regiments of the Christian army under Christ their King and Head, the professed followers of Christ grouped in different organizations for Christian work, obeying His command as they hear it, doing His will as they see it, rather than doing the bidding of their fellow men.

The "Reunion of Christendom"

The first recorded division of Christendom is told in Mark 9:38. The Apostle John came one day to Jesus.—"Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name and he followeth not us." That man was a professed follower of Christ. He was helping his fellow men in the name of Christ, in the way he believed best, but he was not following with the main body of the disciples. That was the first recorded division of Christendom.

"And we forbade him," said John, not because he was doing ill to men or dishonour to God, but because "he followeth not US." That is the first recorded attempt at the reunion of Christendom.

Like the latest attempt in Canada that first recorded attempt was coercive, in so far as its promoters had the power;—"We forbade him;"—and, like Canada's coercive attempt, it failed of its purpose, he followed them not, but continued his good work in his own way. So they appealed to Christ, confident like some in Canada in their assumed authority, that they, and they only, represented the Divine will.

But a surprise was in store for these would-be lords over other men's consciences. They must learn that not even an apostle has the right to come between a man and his duty to God. "Forbid him not," said Christ. So long as he does not interfere with your rights, forbid him not his own rights. Forbid him not doing service to Me and to his fellow men in My Name in the way he believes that service should be given.

Christ sanctioned that first division of Christendom, that first assertion of religious liberty, put upon it the stamp of his approval. He rebuked that first attempt at coercive reunion, that first attempted suppression of religious liberty, put upon it the stamp of His disapproval. "Forbid him not."

But did not Christ pray for His followers "that they all may be one"? Yes—"that they all may be one, as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may

be one in Us" . . . . . "That they may be one, even as We are one," one in spirit for God is a Spirit.

And did not Christ say "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd"? Yes, one flock, following the One Shepherd, wherever they may be throughout the world, and one fold when the "other sheep" of every tribe and tongue and people and nation who have heard the Shepherd's voice and have followed Him, are gathered safely home.

And did not Paul condemn divisions in the Church at Corinth? Yes, because in their ignorance, just out from heathenism with its gods many, they were worshipping men as deities in place of Christ. They were saying, "I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, I of Christ." Some were placing Paul, Apollos and Cephas on equality with Christ. Some were worshipping these men instead of Christ. And Paul asks them, "Is Christ divided"? "Was Paul crucified for you"? "Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul"? The divisions which Paul condemned have no place in Christendom. All true Christians worship only Christ, though differing in their ideals regarding His Church on earth.

Neither Christ nor Paul forbade divisions in Christendom. On the contrary, Christ approved the first recorded division, and Paul was one of the parties in the second recorded division of Christendom. It was on this wise:— Paul and Barnabas were carrying on a joint mission at Antioch. They planned a missionary tour together. They differed in opinion as to the manner and management of that tour. "And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder one from the other." Acts 15: 36-41. But the result of that division, as with many a division since that time, was a wider preaching of the Gospel than if they had kept together.

Since those early times there has been many another division of Christendom, men serving Christ in the way

they believed best. And there has been many an attempt at coercive reunion. And as Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today and forever" He approves the divisions that result from conviction of right and he condemns all attempts at coercive reunion, from the burnings of the middle ages to the latest evictions in Canada.

Since Christ therefore forbids the "Reunion of Christendom" by coercion, the only other way of attaining that end is by all who profess Christ choosing freely the same doctrine or religious belief and teaching, and the same polity or method of church government and worship.

Is such uniform choice probable or possible? Let history answer. Of the near two thousand years since Christendom began, the central thousand years was largely a great coercive uniformity, with little of spiritual life.

The last quarter of Christendom, the last five centuries, the world's greatest era of freedom, knowledge and progress, in religion as in all other things, has been marked in Christendom by three things, first:—by its extension, men and women in loving obedience to Christ's command going into all the world to preach the Gospel,—second, by its growing unity and brotherhood, as witness the New Year week of united prayer by the different evangelical denominations for nearly a century past,—and third, by its ever increasing division, followers of Christ working to cast out from the world, in the name of Christ, the demons of sin and wrong, in the way they believe best, and not as others bid them.

If, therefore, in these later centuries, with the world's greatest freedom, knowledge and progress and Christendom's greatest brotherly unity and missionary activity, the divisions of Christendom have greatly increased, is it reasonable to expect that at any time in human history Christendom will become outwardly one by uniform choice.

Further, if the Spirit of God at the same time and among the same peoples brings forth these three fruits, the extension, the unity and the division of Christendom, who

shall say that the first two are good and the third evil. Must we not rather conclude that the more men study for themselves the Word of God, and seek and follow the guidance of His Spirit, rather than blindly obeying the dictates of other men, the nearer they are to Christ, and that "diversities of operations," "by the one spirit," are all His will.

Must we not conclude that Christendom, with divisions which are caused by obeying God rather than men, is nearer to Christ than a Christendom of uniformity in blind obedience to the commands of men? Five centuries ago the world's Christendom was largely uniform, today it is multiform, but its fruits today show it nearer the mind of Christ than it then was and better answering His prayer.

XXXVIII.

"REUNION" IMPOSSIBLE, UNDESIRABLE

Some features of Christendom which makes its organic reunion impossible are:—

First, its differing attitudes in religious belief and teaching. These may be grouped under two main types, evangelical and rationalistic. The former type stands pledged to the great truths of the Christian faith, to the Bible as the Word of God, the only rule of faith and life, to the Deity of Christ, and to his death upon the cross as an atonement for sin, to salvation from sin by the free grace or favor of God, through faith in Christ.

The latter receives the Bible, not as a revelation from God, of His character and of man's duty and destiny, but as merely an expression of the religious ideals of men in the past. Rationalism in most of its forms takes from Christ His Crown of Deity and from sinners a Saviour, making Him merely a man, a good example to follow, but not a Divine Redeemer to save men from their sin. It makes Christianity a self development by human effort rather than a new creation by Divine power; "a way of life" rather than a regeneration of heart by the Spirit of God, bearing fruit in a life of service to God and of good to men.

These two attitudes in doctrine are sometimes labelled "fundamentalist" and "modernist." But neither is modern. Paul was an evangelical. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." And he tells of "modernists" in his day to whom the cross was "foolishness."

Rationalism varies widely in type, from small beginnings to the fuller grown which rejects all the great truths of the Christian faith, making Christianity merely decency towards fellow men, and largely ignoring the attitude of mind and heart towards God.

So long as these two types continue, and rationalism

in any form is included in the term Christendom, it is manifest that all Christendom cannot be in one organism, professing honestly the same religious beliefs, for the two types are opposite as the poles. The Christ who is all in all to the one type, their God and Saviour, their only hope, is to the other type merely the highest self development of humanity thus far attained, with perhaps higher yet to be.

These two types in doctrine, the evangelical and rationalistic, have been in Christendom from early in its history. They have often been the cause of divisions, and so long as they continue the reunion of Christendom is impossible. The rationalist will not accept the evangelical faith, and the believer cannot endorse, by uniting with it, the rationalist ideal of Christianity and so dishonour Christ.

A second feature of Christendom is its differing types of polity or church government. In Church as in State there are two main types, democracy, government by the people, and autocracy, government over the people. In the former the people are the Church. All who bear rule in the Church must be first chosen to office in the Church by the people. In the latter, those now in office choose others who in future shall hold office and bear rule, the people having no voice in the matter, their part in the Church being simply to work, pray, pay and obey. These two types in the Church cannot become one type, any more than can a nation or state be at the same time a democracy and a despotism. So long as these two types continue there cannot be the "Reunion of Christendom."

A third feature of Christendom is its varied ideals of the ministry. Part of Christendom believes that a ministry, to be "valid," must have more or less clearly defined apostolic succession through episcopal consecration. Another part of Christendom believes that any ministry, chosen by the Spirit of God speaking through the voice and call of His people, and ordained or set apart by others thus chosen by the people, is a valid ministry of Christ.

The former cannot accept the "validity" of the latter ordination. The latter cannot accept the superiority of the former, or the necessity for reordination in order to a valid ministry. These two types may have true unity of Spirit, but cannot be merged into uniformity, and so long as belief and disbelief in the special validity of any type of ordination continues, the reunion of Christendom is impossible.

A fourth feature of Christendom is its widely varied types of worship. There are, and doubtless always will be, in the Church on earth some who crave the "enrichment of worship" in the way of ritual, more or less elaborate. Others desire a service of worship chaste, dignified, reverent, "all things decently and in order" but free from the colorful and ornate. Such things are to them hindrance, not help.

These two types may both have worshippers truly devout towards God, and with a true spirit of unity towards those of the other type, but the two types will not, cannot, blend into one. Hence the necessity for separate organizations in order to freedom of worship, and the impossibility of the reunion of Christendom while adherence to or avoidance of one type or the other continues.

The reunion of Christendom which for the above and other reasons is practically impossible is for many reasons undesirable.

It is not desirable in the interests of Divine truth. When two Churches, one evangelical, the other rationalistic, unite on a basis which both can accept, it is manifest that the definite evangelical pledge of the one must be omitted because the other cannot accept it. The united body must therefore lack that distinctly evangelical note. Individuals may hold and teach evangelical truth, but the Church as a Church, does not stand for it, and by so much the Evangel of light and life and hope is lost to the world.

There are today not a few claiming to be of Christendom, who have drifted far from the great central truths of

Christianity, to whom the cross and its atonement, sin and redemption, are but figures of speech, and if there were today a "Reunion of Christendom," the great truths that centre in the cross would have to be omitted from its basis of union, because much of so-called Christendom would not accept those truths, and "Christendom" would by so much cease to be Christian.

Reunion is not desirable in the interests of religious knowledge. Uniformity, casting aside that which is not accepted by others, tends to narrow the search for truth and dim its vision. It is unscientific. What would be thought of scientists, in any field of knowledge, who, instead of searching for truth, and more truth, would make it their aim to discard all except what all others would accept.

Reunion is not desirable in the interests of religious liberty. So long as men think differently in matters of religion, divisions are necessary that all may be free to work and worship according to what they believe to be for them the will of God. The only way for men to bear witness to what they believe the truth, is to stand for that truth whatever others may do, and that stand is their right and duty so long as they do not interfere with the rights of others.

Reunion is not desirable for the extension of the Kingdom of God. The divisions of Christendom with "unity of spirit in the bond of peace" make a wider appeal to different types of men, and win and hold more to Christendom than if all were one uniform organization.

Reunion is not desirable for peace and unity within the Church. When in the one Church there are strongly divergent views, there is unrest and strife, and Christian work is hindered, as witness the Presbyterian Church in Canada in recent years. But since the withdrawal to another Church of those who sought her extinction rather than her extension, the Presbyterian Church in Canada has peace.

"Reunion" Impossible, Undesirable

Other Churches of Christendom too, where divergent views prevail, have not a little of their time and strength dissipated in internal strife, in attack by autocracy, ecclesiasticism, rationalism or ritualism, compelling resistance by those who cannot accept such things.

Some of these conflicts in other Churches will probably result in division in order to maintain the truth of God and the liberties and rights of the people, and when such divisions come, the Church which has an evangel to offer to the world will be free to devote its strength to that glorious employ.

But as Christendom draws nearer to Christ, will it not be nearer reunion? By no means. As Christendom draws nearer to Christ, there will be more of the spirit of Unity, and a fuller realization, by all true Christians, of their oneness in Christ. But nearly all the great revivals of religion in the world have been times of division in the Church, men standing for what they believed to be the will of God, instead of conforming to the will of other men and obeying their commands. Conversely as a rule, the times when there has been least religious conviction and spiritual life have been the times of agitation and pressure for outward uniformity.

Whatever the future may hold in store for earth's Christendom, the present duty of every Christian is to follow his own conviction of the will of God, so long as he does not interfere with the rights of others, which can never be God's will, and to work and pray for the closer union of all Christendom to Christ.

If "reunion" were permitted to care for itself, or rather left to God's care, and the time and strength and means now wasted in fruitless and useless attempt at outward uniformity were devoted to the extension of Christendom, and to securing its greater uniformity with Christ, it would be for the greater good of men and the greater glory of God, in hastening the day when "every kindred, every tribe on this terrestrial ball," shall "hail the power of Jesus name and crown Him Lord of all."

XXXIX.

THE FUTURE

"The Church of the future," The Future of the Church" is an oft-writ theme, in colors varying from the glow of optimist to the gloom of pessimist, and usually of little practical benefit to the present or future. It diverts time and strength from the Church of the present and by so much hinders the Church of the future.

But as such prophecy will doubtless persist so long as the Church on earth continues, it is well to bear in mind some facts.

It is a fact that God, in whom and for whom the Church exists, is not only "Infinite" and "Eternal" but "Unchangeable."

It is a fact that Jesus Christ, "the Chief Corner Stone," upon whom the Church is builded, is "the same yesterday, today and forever."

It is a fact that the Holy Spirit, the life of the Church, without whom the Church, present or future, is but a dead form, is ever the same, in His Divine Person and character and work.

It is a fact that human nature, the material from which the Church on earth is builded, has been the same through all its history; the same in its sin and conscious guilt; the same in its unsatisfied longing; the same in attempt to satisfy that longing with the things of this world; the same in its experience that this world can never satisfy; the same in its blind groping after God and its failure to find Him by any device of human wisdom.

It is a fact that God has provided a remedy for sin, a satisfaction for human longing and unrest, and that this remedy is ever the same; that "there is no other name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved, but by the name of Jesus."

It is a fact that this Eternal plan of Eternal love, is

the same for the future as for the present, and that there never will be any other remedy for sin, or satisfaction for the sinner. If there were it would mean that the work of Christ is insufficient and incomplete.

If therefore, all that has to do with the Church on earth, in the past, present and future, is the same—its foundation the same, its material the same, its Builder and Maker the same, its character and purpose the same, its aim and object the same, that Church must be the same so long as it is in the building.

In the future of the Church on earth, as in the past, God's loving call, by His word and spirit, will come to men. As in the past some will respond to that call and some will reject it. As in the past some will receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, the only rule of faith and life, and some will receive them as merely the writings of men. As in the past some will say of Christ "My Lord and My God" and some will attempt to take from Him His Crown of Deity and from sinners a Saviour, making Him only a man.

Thus will the Church of the future, on earth, be in some measure as the Church of the present, with its hopes and fears, its conflicts and victories, its trials and triumphs, and with Christ, as in the past, ever in the midst of His Church, leading her steadily on.

With so much the same, there is in the Church one continuous change, the change of growth. The knowledge of God's way of life and peace is spreading. The circulation of the Scriptures, God's message of love to His children, is increasing. The influence of those Scriptures is ever widdening as their message spreads, for that message satisfies human longings as nothing else can do.

Opposition to the Church and to those Scriptures and their message may be strong, but that message will meet a growing response in the restless heart of humanity as the knowledge of it spreads. The river of water of life will flow on wider and deeper through the world's sin and sorrow, making glad life's waste places, till the Church is at last

complete and "Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

What—or when—or where—that completion and satisfaction will be, no man knoweth. Those who attempt to interpret the New Testament prophecies of the future should remember the mistakes in interpreting the Old Testament prophecies of the present. The Jews had their prophecies of a coming kingdom and king. They interpreted them in terms of their own dispensation, and believed them to mean an earthly kingdom and king for Israel. They could not grasp the idea of the spiritual kingdom which the Messiah was coming to set up. They were far astray.

Just as little can today interpret the prophecies of the future in terms of the present. Our part is to do what we can to further His kingdom as it is, to proclaim His truth as we know it, to do His will as we see it. Thus will we best promote that holy and happy future, wherever and whenever and whatever that holy and happy future may be.

XL.

"LEST WE FORGET"

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His Commandments or no." Deut. 8 : 2.

Israel had been led from Egypt's bondage by a long, hard journey through the Arabian desert, and in the freedom and comfort of Canaan they were not to forget that journey nor Him who had led them nor His purpose in leading them.

That purpose was not merely to bring them from one land to another, from serfdom to freedom, from Egypt to Canaan. Forty days and less would have sufficed for that journey. The distance was not great. His higher, greater purpose was to lead them nearer to Himself, to fit them for their destiny as His chosen people.

God is ever the same. He leads His people, in His loving care for them, often by a rough, hard road from worse to better things. From seeking satisfaction in things of this world and making these things life's chief end, He leads them by the road of disappointment and sorrow to put their trust in Him, where only can be found true rest and peace. All down her history He has led His Church through trial, nearer to Himself.

He has in these latter days led the Presbyterian Church in Canada from threatened bondage to clerical and official despotism into a larger liberty. He has led her through years of wilderness with its deserts of discouragement and its oases of peace and rest;—with its fiery flying serpents of reproach, confiscation and loss, and its manna plenteous in the fellowship of kindred minds standing for freedom and for truth;—with its pillar of cloud and fire, its conviction of right, leading steadily on—"o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone,"—and with the morn of

freedom we may again hear the voice Divine, "Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee, to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no."

The charge "Remember" is fitting today in Canada, as of old in Israel, for already, with wrong persisting and thousands suffering from that wrong, there is heard "forget."

"Forget!" cries Coercion. "It is the Master's will that the Churches should live and work together in the Christian spirit." Thus writes Coercion, who turned a deaf ear to all pleadings for the Christian spirit so long as anything of his coercive wrong could be accomplished, and with as yet no sign of changing attitude towards that wrong.

"Forget!" cries Confiscation. "Now that the government Commission has divided the property, let nothing hinder the cordial co-operation which is so necessary to the work of both the Churches." Thus writes Confiscation, after he has seized Presbyterian church homes and possessions and while thousands of Presbyterian people are suffering from his deeds. To forget the spoiling of one's home or church is not a Christian duty, even though a part of that spoil has been perforce returned. Rather is it a duty "to watch and not to suffer one's house"—or church—"again to to be broken up."

There are others too who would have the Church forget her wilderness journey. Familiar voices from Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress echo the cry. "Forget" cry Pliable, and Worldly Wiseman, and Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, with whom it was a matter, not of conviction but of convenience, not of principle but of policy, who took no stand for truth and freedom till victory was sure, and who are not wise or safe counsellors and guides for the Church in days to come.

But greater far than the few feeble cries "forget" is the age-long, world-wide chorus "Remember."

"Remember"—cry the heroes and defenders of the faith in ages past who maintained religious liberty in face of all its foes.

"Lest We Forget"

"Remember"—cry the martyrs who through the centuries suffered and died, but would not surrender their faith at the bidding of ecclesiastical or civil tyranny.

"Remember"—cry Presbyterians in Canada who through the years have resisted wrong, who do not wish their children to pass through a like conflict, and who know that a knowledge of the issues at stake is necessary to preserve truth and freedom in the days to come.

"Remember"—cry those unjustly robbed by civil power of their church homes and compelled to worship wherever shelter can be found because they would not surrender their religious convictions at illegal and usurped autocratic command.

"Remember"—cries Truth—that I am entrusted to your care and that you are pledged as a Church to "maintain and defend" me.

"Remember"—cries Freedom—that "every man must give an account of himself to God"—that no man has a right to intrude into the realm of conscience, to come between another and his God and bid him change his faith.

"Remember"—cries Paul. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith"—"Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine"—"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."

"Remember"—says Christ. "Ye are my witnesses." "Take heed that your witness of Me be true, that as keepers and teachers of My Truth you leave no open door of entrance in your Church for any teaching that would rob Me of My Deity, making me merely a man, taking from the sinner a Divine Saviour, his only ground of hope."

"Thou shall remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee" these twenty years.

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